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THE STAGING
OF THE
“MIRACLES DE NOSTRE DAME
PAR PERSONNAGES”
OF
MS. CANGÉ

By
DOROTHY PENN, PH.D.
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
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This thesis having been approved in respect
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.....
Dean

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D. P.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of drama is more complicated, and, in this respect, becomes more difficult than that of the other genres of literature. These other genres, such as the novel or the poem, depend merely on an author and a public, but the drama has a third factor, — an organized theater, actors and a stage. A drama exists only during its performance, and no two productions can be identical; neither do any two members of the audience see and receive the play from the same viewpoint. "No art is so changeable, so subject to the human equation, so complex, as drama."¹ Today, when plays are widely read, as well as acted, we know how important is this third factor of actor and stage. When acted, drama has the double appeal to the emotions, — through the eye and through the ear; and much depends on the actor's interpretation of the role. Then, too, when speech fails to express the idea or the emotion of the play, silent action, music, or another art may take its place upon the stage.

In the early history of French drama any study that may throw light on this element of the theater, i. e., the stage and the actor, would seem worth while, and particularly so for the fourteenth century, where, were it not for a single manuscript, a link in the development of French drama would very nearly be missing.

This manuscript, containing forty *Miracles de Nostre Dame par personnages*, is a very precious document. More documents have come down to us of the liturgical drama of the tenth and eleventh centuries and of the semi-liturgical plays of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, than manuscripts containing the texts of plays of the fourteenth century. Then, for the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, we have an abundance, so to speak, of manuscripts of the great mystery plays.

The "tropaires" and the "ordinaires" bring to us the liturgical dramas of the church, — dramas, or dialogues, written into the text of the mass, to illustrate and to render more real the great feasts of the ritualistic year. In the manuscripts of the semi-liturgical plays

¹ Donald Clive Stuart, *Why Drama is "Different"*, *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, Nov. 12, 1926, v. xxvii, No. 8, p. 207.

of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries we see the beginning of a stage representation which grew into the elaborate mystery play of the fifteenth century.²

Of these semi-liturgical dramas, the *Jeu de St. Nicholas* and the *Miracle de Théophile* announce in form and theme the miracles which were cultivated in the fourteenth century. The first of these by Jean Bodel has a "preeciers", or prologue, addressed to the audience which, on December 5th (Saint Nicholas' Day), was assembled in a closed room to witness this play. The legend which Bodel staged is found many times in the literature of the Middle Ages; he has enlarged the subject; he has treated it in an original fashion and created, if one may apply the term to the thirteenth century, a theory of "romantic drama", a fusion of the serious and the comic. In the *Jeu de St. Nicholas* there are thirty-eight changes of place of action, no unity of time, men of all ranks and classes. This play demanded much from the faith and credulity of the spectators.³

The *Miracle de Théophile* of Ruteboeuf shows that even in the thirteenth century were written "Miracles de Nostre Dame" with a view to their staging. It is composed of a number of short scenes, not blended together, tho well conceived individually and written in excellent language with a style that is sometimes affected. At the end of the play the Virgin intervenes and Satan is obliged to give back the soul which had been sold to him. If the characters are less living than those of the *Jeu de St. Nicholas*, it is because Ruteboeuf was more satiric than religious, and was not writing, spontaneously, as in his poetry, but at the order of a guild or society; he treated his subject sincerely, even ardently, but with noticeable effort.⁴

It seemed at first to men who were studying the development of drama in the Middle Ages, that there was an eclipse of the religious genre in the fourteenth century, but this was due to a lack of documents to furnish us the texts of representations in that century.

² These semi-liturgical dramas which furnish such valuable indications are: a) the *Représentation d'Adam*, b) a *Fragment of a Resurrection Play*, c) the *Miracle de Théophile*, by Ruteboeuf, d) the *Jeu de St. Nicholas*, by Jean Bodel. Petit de Julleville in *Les Mystères*, v. I, Ch. 2, Ch. 3, and v. II, Ch. 6, and Gustave Cohen in *La Mise en Scène dans le Théâtre Religieux*, pp. 1-62, and Gustave Cohen in *Le Théâtre Religieux*, pp. 1-39, and Creizenach, *Geschichte des Neueren Dramas*, 3 vols., A. Jeanroy, in *Le Théâtre Religieux en France du XI au XIII siècle*, and other scholars in the mediaeval field, are referred to for able studies of the drama from its beginnings through the thirteenth century.

³ Petit de Julleville: *Les Mystères*, v. I, pp. 95-107, v. II, pp. 221-223.

⁴ Petit de Julleville: *Les Mystères*, v. I, p. 108.

Gustave Cohen cites various studies and discoveries in the drama of the fourteenth century which show that the lacunae could be filled if only more manuscripts could be brought to light.⁵ The reason that practically no fourteenth century manuscripts of mystery plays have been found is due to the fact that each succeeding mystery was an enlargement and incorporation of the earlier play and hence superseded it. The old manuscript was then discarded and so the fifteenth century mysteries are the elaborations of the fourteenth century plays.

The Ms. Cangé, *Les Miracles de Nostre Dame par personnages*, Nos. 819 and 820 of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, is by far the most interesting, and also one of the most important from the viewpoint of the development of the stage during the fourteenth century. It is in two small volumes; volume one containing twenty-two miracles, and volume two containing eighteen miracles.⁶ Each miracle is preceded by a well executed small miniature from which some interesting conclusions may be drawn as to costume and decoration of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. These miniatures seem to represent either the theme of the story or some episode of the play rather than an actual stage setting. Of course caution must be used in the drawing of any definite conclusions, for it may well be that the miniatures represent the artist-scribe's idea of what a scene should

⁵ Gustave Cohen, *Le Théâtre en France au Moyen Age*, I, *Le Théâtre Religieux*, p. 40, "Les études que M. A. Thomas et moi-même avons publiées sur le *Théâtre à Paris et aux environs à la fin du XIV siècle* (*Romania*, 1893 et 1909), celle de M. Emile Roy dans son *Mystère de la Passion en France du XIV au XVI siècle*, ma propre découverte de *Moralités du XIV siècle* dans le Ms. 617 du Chantilly, le fragment publié par J. Bedier dans la *Romania* en 1895, l'assignation au XIV siècle des *Mystères inédits publiés* par Jubinal (1837), la publication par G. Paris et Ul. Robert des *Miracles de Nostre Dame* (*Soc. des Anciens Textes Français*, 1876 et s.), la prochaine édition de la *Passion Gasconne* du Ms. Didot par M. Shepard pour la même Collection, viennent amplement combler cette lacune." In addition, M. E. Roy in *Étude sur le Théâtre Français du XIV et XV siècles*, and his *Jour du Jugement*, and Petit de Julleville in *Les Mystères*, v. II, Ch. XVII, analyze most of the known manuscripts of this period.

⁶ The original source of this manuscript is not known. M. de Cangé, celebrated amateur of the eighteenth century, bought it (one knows not where) at a good price, as attests a note written on the guard leaf of each volume: "J. P. G. Chatre de Cangé, Emp. 100 l." In 1733 the manuscript entered the collection of the King. Volume I has 262 pages containing miracles numbered from one to twenty-two; Volume II has eighteen miracles numbered from one to eighteen (not twenty-three to forty as in the edition of G. Paris and Ul. Robert). The two volumes, in folio, written on vellum, in double columns, are in the same handwriting, which is that of the first years of the fifteenth century, probably around 1405. A modern hand has written in on the first page: "Table des moralités". Each miniature is 3 x 3 1/8 inches and is placed on the first page of the play to which it belongs, in the upper left-hand corner; i. e., at the top of the first column on the recto side of the sheet. Each sheet has one page number for both the recto and the verso. The predominating colors in these miniatures are blue and gold.

be, rather than what it was on the stage. These miniatures will again be referred to as they give valuable indications of the stage technique.

In seeking to establish the stage setting of these *Miracles de Notre Dame*, one finds it necessary to determine the stage and the machinery, to note the development in elaborateness within the forty plays themselves, and to indicate the extent to which the plays made use of the stage and devices of the thirteenth century and developed them towards the complicated "secretz" to be found in the mystery plays of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. To do this, one must take into account the stage as it was at the beginning of the fourteenth century, the unusual devices, i. e., the "secretz" or "trucs" as described in stage directions and in the accounts of eye-witnesses, and such visual aids as may be had from carvings on cathedrals, stained glass windows, tapestries, and miniatures in manuscripts. But these sources of information as to the stage of the fourteenth century are necessarily scanty, incomplete and inaccurate. The most reliable source for a study of the staging of the *Miracles de Notre Dame* lies in a careful reading of the text. From the dialogue of the play one can picture to oneself what must have been the setting; one can visualize the various "mansions" and their locations; one can trace the steps of actors to and fro upon the stage; one can endeavor to ascertain the machinery used by which were accomplished the realistic effects, the torture scenes and the miracles. A brief review of the stage of the twelfth and thirteenth century and of the more elaborate settings of the fifteenth century is of help towards this visualization.

We know that the *Représentation d'Adam*, the *Fragment of the Resurrection Play*, the *Jeu de St. Nicholas*, and the *Miracle de Théophile*, were not given within the church.⁷ The plays were given in the square or open place before the church or in a hall which had a definitely limited stage. We know hell was represented on one side, to the spectator's right; heaven to the left; the structure of heaven on a raised scaffolding is very carefully described to us in the stage directions of the *Représentation d'Adam*. We may assume it continued down through the centuries to be built and decorated in much the same manner. In form we know the stage to be of one level.⁸

⁷ See note 2, above.

⁸ Gustave Cohen, *Mystère de la Passion*, Ch. VII, p. CXIX. The Frères Parfaict, in v. I of their *Histoire du Théâtre*, Amsterdam, 1735, made the mistake of supposing the theater to be of five or six stories, one superimposed upon the other.

The French stage seems never to have had even the three level form found in England, where hell was the lowest stage, then earth in the middle, and above all, the top level representing heaven. On the single level stage in France were located all the "mansions", that is, all the structures representing definite places, and the spectator was called upon to use his imagination and to see in a journey of a few steps from one structure to another, a long pilgrimage from France to Jerusalem or to Rome; or the illusion of a great battle was created by four or five men fighting on foot. An actor, when not participating in the action of the moment, remained at his own particular place, or seated within his own structure. There was no curtain to be drawn between scenes, no shifting of scenery, although some of the houses were provided with a curtain which might be drawn to hide from the audience certain scenes such as childbirth.

We know that the drama of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries had mechanical devices of which it might well be proud; Balaam's ass which answered the angel was one; the lions of the play *Daniel* of Hilarius were another; the smoke and flame from out the mouth of hell, the thunder, the angels flying through the air, were all devices of the early stage. However, the greatest aid to a visualization of the possibilities of the fourteenth century mystery and miracle stage is a study of the crowded scene and elaborate devices of the fifteenth and sixteenth century mystery play.⁹

In the first place, we must have in these later centuries a stage of larger proportions, and very frequently an out-door stage. The stage of the *Passion* given in Paris in 1420 was about 100 feet wide; that of the famous *Mystère de la Passion de Valenciennes* of 1547 was 50 meters long, 25 meters deep, or over 150 feet wide and over 75 feet deep. A picture of this stage has been preserved to us and is reproduced in many histories of drama of the Middle Ages.¹⁰ This illustration shows the elaborate hell-mouth, the flames and smoke, the souls in torment; it shows the more imposing "mansions", no

⁹ For discussions of the mysteries of these centuries, see: G. Bapst, *Essai sur l'Histoire du Théâtre*, Livre I, Ch. 5, 6; Wm. Creizenach, *Geschichte des Neueren Dramas*, v. I; Gustave Cohen, *Théâtre en France au Moyen Age*, I, *Le Théâtre Religieux*, pp. 39-75; Gustave Cohen, *Histoire de la Mise en Scène dans le Théâtre Religieux du Moyen Age*, pp. 62-269; Petit de Julleville, *Les Mystères*, v. I, Ch. 11; E. Roy, *Le Mystère de la Passion en France du XIV au XVI siècle*; E. Roy, *Etudes sur le Théâtre français du XIV et XV siècles*, pp. CXC-CCXVIII.

¹⁰ Petit de Julleville, *Histoire de la Langue et de la Littérature française*, v. II, p. 416.

longer merely cloth stretched over reed framework, but temples with columns, hung with silks. It shows the basin representing the sea with a boat on the water.

Among the properties owned by one of the various guilds of the fifteenth century, we find listed:¹¹

A large doll to represent a child; animals, dove that brings food and drink, beds, straw, ship, leash for hounds, bread and crock, keys to prison, purse of gold, altars, anvils, hammer, stones to throw, weapons of warfare, clothing, hunting horns, vessels for eating and drinking.

Another record gives us the cost of production of the *Passion de Mons*, 1501;¹² in yet another, we find how Christ was made to walk upon the water, how the sea gave up the bodies of the dead, how graves opened and the dead arose, how the stars and moon fell from a flaming heaven.¹³

In addition to what help one may get from the plays of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and from those of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, there is something to be learned from what might be listed as "contemporary comment". Froissart¹⁴ tells of spectacles given to honor the entrance into Paris of Isabel of Bavaria, wife of Charles VI. He describes certain marvels in the form of animals that moved and spoke. He tells us of a ship which moved across the stage on wheels. From other records brought to light, we learn how a too curious spectator was killed by the discharge from a cannon fired during the performance of the *Miracle de Théophile* at the town of Aunay.¹⁵

Iconographical studies¹⁶ are often of great interest. It is not to be denied that many ideas as to certain scenes from the mysteries are to be derived from sculpture, such as that of the Day of Judgment over cathedral doorways, and from the windows, especially of the Cathedral of Chartres, which was the church above all others dedicated

¹¹ W. Lohmann, *Untersuchungen über Jean Louvets 12 Mysterien zu Ebern von Notre Dame de Liesse*, Greifswald, 1900, p. 14.

¹² G. Cohen, *Mystère de la Passion*, Le livre de conduite du Regisseur, et le compte des dépenses, Paris, 1925.

¹³ E. Roy, *Le Jour du Jugement*, p. 115. This last interesting phenomenon was accomplished by having copper stars and moon sewed to a cloth heaven. Then fire was set to the cloth, and, as it burned, the stars realistically fell from heaven.

¹⁴ Froissart, *Chronicles*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, t. XIV, p. 14.

¹⁵ A. Thomas, *Le Théâtre à Paris et aux environs à la fin du XIV siècle*, in *Romania*, 1892, p. 606.

¹⁶ Emile Mâle, *L'Art Religieux au moyen âge*, Librairie Armand Colin, Paris, 1908, Ch. 1, Art et le Théâtre.

to the Virgin. One instance of known influence of a mystery play on art is recorded by Gustave Cohen.¹⁷ In a woodcut of the late fifteenth century there appear the same shepherds, with the very same names and offerings, as took part in a nativity play which is found in a Walloon manuscript of *Mystères et Moralités*.¹⁸ Yet one must keep in mind that miniatures are not so accurate, for it is more often the scribe who draws on his imagination than it is an artist who pictures what he has seen upon the stage.

Having noted briefly the setting and some of the devices of the drama of the preceding and the following centuries, we come to a consideration of the fourteenth century. With the help of suggestions from earlier and later centuries, we shall try, in a study of the *Miracles de Notre Dame*, to show the practicability of their production as regards stage, "mansions" or structures, machinery and devices (i. e., animals, beheadings, miracles, etc.), and the similarity and imitation in staging which is found within the group of forty plays. This demonstration will involve an attempt to show how one author imitated an earlier dramatist in his most successful points, and how this imitation promoted a rapid growth in the skill of staging and in the use of clever mechanical devices to amuse and astonish the audience.

The manuscript containing these forty *Miracles de Notre Dame* was evidently the property of a guild or society whose purpose was to honor the Virgin by a play given on one of the principal feast days of Our Lady. The location of this guild remains unknown. Senlis,¹⁹ Rouen,²⁰ and Paris,²¹ have been named as probable locations. It seems that Boulogne might also be considered as having some claim to the honor of being the site of the guild's productions.²² The

¹⁷ Gustave Cohen, *Le Théâtre en France au Moyen Age*, I, *Le Théâtre Religieux*, p. 31.

¹⁸ Ms. 617 of the Bibliothèque du duc d'Aumale.

¹⁹ Chas. Magnin, *Journal des Savants*, Jan.-Mar., 1847.

²⁰ Onésime Le Roy, *Etudes sur les Mystères*.

²¹ H. Schnell, *Über die Abfassungsort der Miracles de Notre Dame par personnages*, Ausgaben und Abhandlungen, Marburg, 1886.

²² While it is not inherent in our subject to attempt any proof that Boulogne might have been the home of the guild, it is interesting to note that either a pilgrimage to Boulogne or "la Dame de Boulogne" is mentioned in eight plays, Nos. 1, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 30. No other one place is mentioned so often. In all the forty plays which pretend to take place variously in France, Spain, Scotland, Rome, Constantinople, Jerusalem, etc., there is no mention of the home city. That is, there is no intimation that the plays take place in the local town of the guild, unless it is in Play No. 10, *L'Evesque a qui Notre Dame s'apparut*. This play is one in which the spirit of Virgin worship is very strong; in it the bishop, his penance done, returns to his own church where the

dialect of the plays is Ile-de-France or Champagne, and locates the guild in the north of France, probably near Paris. The proximity to Paris and the fact that various authors doubtless were often in Paris, could account for the familiarity with that city on which is based one claim that the capital was the site of the guild.

These plays were probably not given more often than once or sometimes twice a year. For purposes of this investigation the order of the manuscript is assumed to be the order in which the plays were written for production, and later studies on their staging will support this assumption. It would seem that this guild celebrated its Virgin chiefly on three of her Holy Days, February 2nd, the Purification, March 25th, the Annunciation, and August 15th, the Assumption. December 8th, the Conception, and September 8th, the Birth, are also days on which plays might have been given. Some of the plays dealing with the lives of saints were possibly given on the saint's own day, but twenty-two of the forty plays give indication of having been performed in February, March, or August. Sometimes a saint whose feast day occurred in the same month as one of the major festivals of the Virgin is celebrated in a play that serves both to glorify the Virgin and to honor the saint. Such a case is that of St. Valentine, celebrated in a play, given in February, in honor of the Purification of the Virgin.²³

play opened.

L'Ermite: Vous avez droit, si m'aist Diex,
Sire, car c'est noble besongne;
Et, si vous plaist, pour c'a Boulogne
Irons ensemble.

.
Alons men donque a court plait,
Sire, *par my vostre chappelle*
Saluer la vierge pucelle,
En chantant par humilité:
Regina celi, lettare, etc.

These words show that the play, without stating it in so many words, was supposed to take place in Boulogne, for it is thither that the bishop returns to his own chapel of Nostre Dame. The fact that the revelation as to where the play takes place is not intentional on the part of the author, but is indirectly given, inclines one to think that the guild was perhaps located at Boulogne. That it is the earlier plays which mention Boulogne is of significance also. In the beginning of this repertoire, the authors would more consciously be thinking of the particular Virgin whom they wished to honor, and Her name, or Her town, would be upon their lips. As the plays were adapted from epic and romance sources, other place names crept in, but Our Lady of Boulogne reigns in the early plays. It might be that this Play No. 10 was written to explain how the church of Nostre Dame de Boulogne came to be in possession of a chalice which legend said the Virgin had given to it.

²³ From the fact that the majority of the plays indicate that they were written for one of the three major feasts of the Virgin, it might be supposed that those plays

Probably in few instances were more than one play given in a single year. The productions of this guild, then, covered a period of approximately thirty-five to forty years. Magnin dates them from 1345 to 1380.²⁴ This theory of the staging of one play, or sometimes two plays a year, fits in well with the order of the plays in the manuscript in the following respects: It allows sufficient time to elapse between plays which very evidently were performed on February 2nd or March 25th, showing that in several instances the guild celebrated the Virgin on one of those dates each year for several consecutive years. It allows time between plays for the same author, or a new author, to copy such verses, and especially such new devices from the year before as were of great interest to the spectators. No identical copying of rondel, dialogue, theme, or device, could have been done within a shorter period than a year, for the imitation would have been too obvious. It allows time to write the new play. This might involve the securing of another author; even the same author, taking new material, would not likely have written an entirely new play under six to ten months. It would allow for the guild to accumulate sufficient funds to stage another play; to give contracts for the construction of such new settings as might be required; to assemble and rehearse the actors.²⁵

Granted, then, that the guild honored its Patron, the Blessed Virgin Mary, once, sometimes twice, a year, and that to this end were engaged the services of a number of authors²⁶ throughout a period

that have no clear indications were also given on one of these three days. Sometimes two plays might be given within one year, as is the case with No. 19 and No. 20. No. 19 was probably given February 2nd and No. 20 in December in memory of the Slaughter of the Innocents and of St. Sylvester. Between No. 26, given on February 2nd, and No. 27, given on March 25th, a little more than a year would elapse.

²⁴ Charles Magnin, *Journal des Savants*, 1847. See also summary of Magnin's reasons in E. Roy, *Etudes sur le théâtre français du XIV et XV siècles*, pp. CXXVI-CXXVII.

²⁵ We know that at Aunay-les-Bondy, near Paris, at this same time or a little later, plays were given by custom about once a year. "Si comme es diz jeux on a acoustumé a faire par chascun an a Paris." A. Thomas, *Le Théâtre à Paris et aux environs à la fin du XIV siècle*, Romania, 1892.

²⁶ Petit de Julleville, *Les Mystères*, v. I, p. 121, states the forty *Miracles de Notre Dame* are the work of the same author or at least of one school animated by the same spirit. Hermann Schnell, *Über die Abfassungsort der Miracles de Notre Dame par personnages*, p. 3, suggests, as a result of his study of the spirit of each play, that the number of authors is twenty-seven. I do not find it easy to establish the identity of authorship of the plays by comparison of verse, of theme, or of treatment of the role of the Virgin. Certain plays most obviously have different authors. This is seen in the noticeable increase or decrease of religious intensity in the plays; the varying affectation of the language when describing or appealing to the Virgin, and in the source of the

of some thirty or forty years, and that the manuscripts of the play as written were preserved in the records of the guild and were accessible to the various successive authors who might wish to look them over, one may attempt to picture the stage on which these miracles were given, and to show how, as the authors and actors gained confidence and discovered by trial what most pleased the spectators, the plays became more ambitious in theme and more elaborate in staging.

Gustave Cohen says that by a mere review of the titles of these *Miracles de Nostre Dame*, the themes of which include the lives of saints, folklore, legend, and epic, one can imagine what the genre of the miracle play might have become in the hands of a Calderon or a Lope de Vega. But such genius did not appear in the fourteenth century and the genre remained in the hands of mediocre artisans of verse.²⁷ Perhaps they were only mediocre; nevertheless these authors made not only artistic, but effective dramatic use of all stage equipment and tradition bequeathed to them by the preceding century, and quickly and cleverly developed new technique, made use of new devices, and, in short, produced plays interesting in action and in realism,²⁸ and constituting an actual advance forward in the drama of the century.

theme treated. Yet might not the more ecclesiastical play No. 30, *St. Jehan le Paulu*, for instance, have the same author as No. 31, *Berte*, and the epic spirit animating No. 31 be due to influence on the poet of the epic poem on which he drew? I should suggest the number of authors as between fifteen and twenty, basing my judgment on the intensity of religious feeling in the plays, on the theme, and on the staging.

²⁷ Gustave Cohen, *Le Théâtre en France au moyen âge*, v. I, p. 41.

²⁸ For a study of the *Miracles de Nostre Dame* as reflecting the life of the times, see Otto Patzer, *The "Miracles de Nostre Dame" and the Fourteenth Century*, p. 44, *Modern Language Notes*, February, 1905.

CHAPTER I.

The *Miracles de Nostre Dame* furnish one of the most genuine and interesting examples of evidence of the extent to which the Cult of the Virgin filled the life and thought of the Middle Ages. The miracle play is much more human than the mystery play. The themes of these miracles are not limited to orthodox scriptural stories, but find their plots in the legendary lives of saints, in epic literature, and in romances of adventure.¹ The Cult of the Virgin was carried almost to the point of paradox in the fourteenth century; not only did She save sinners from eternal damnation, but frequently from what was their very just punishment in this world. She is conceived as the very essence of love and pity, and She saves and extends Her grace to the wicked as well as to the pious, provided they call upon Her in repentance. In the Miracles, whatever the source of the story, there is this one common characteristic, that the Virgin descends from heaven to bring about the solution of the plot, to save or to console the unhappy victim,—be he innocent or guilty. In No. 12 She restores to her honored position the Marquise de la Gaudine who was falsely accused of adultery; in No. 3 She punishes the murderer of a bishop; in No. 6 She protects and exonerates Saint Jean Chrysotomes, falsely accused of infidelity to his king. In No. 15 She restores to life a child accidentally drowned. Her great mercy is shown towards criminals, who, however great their sin, obtain Her pardon. In No. 2 the abbess is delivered of her child by the Virgin herself; in No. 4 the queen of Portugal, a murderess twice over, is saved from the stake; in No. 30, the Virgin restores to life the king's daughter murdered by a hermit, and She pardons the hermit. This role of the Virgin is constant, and, of course, determines one of the important features of the

¹ H. C. Jensen, *Die Miracles de Nostre Dame par personnages, Untersucht in ihrem Verhältniss zu Gautier de Coincy*, Heidelberg, 1892.

Ludwig Voigt, *Die Mirakel der Pariser HS 819 welche epische stoffe behandeln auf ihre Quellen untersucht*, Grimma, 1883

Jacobus a Voragine, *Legenda aurea*, ed. Graesse, Leipzig, 1846.

Gröber, G., *Grundriss der Romansche Philologie*, II, 1, p. 1205.

Mussafia, A., *Studien zu der Mittelälterlichen Marienlegenden*, Vienna Wissenschaften, v. 113, 115, 119, 123, 139.

Vincent de Beauvais, *Miroir Historial*, G. E. Snavely, Baltimore, 1908.

Philippe de Beaumanoir, *La Manekine* (Soc. des Anc. Textes français), Paris, 1884.

staging. Except in No. 5, the *Nativité*, the Virgin is seated aloft, hears the prayers addressed to Her, and at the critical moment intervenes in the affairs of man below. One does not feel that the Virgin's role is purely that of a "dea ex machina"² but rather that the guild, presenting these miracle plays, was most devout in its veneration of the Virgin, and that, though the intervention of the Virgin in human affairs may seem unnecessary (as in the case of some plays the themes of which are worldly), it was towards this scene of heavenly grace and supernatural power that the author and spectator looked with greatest interest. Or, in any case, it was this feature which justified the play. This feeling that the fourteenth century *Miracles de Nostre Dame* were genuine expressions of praise of the Virgin is borne out by a comparison of the sixteenth century *Douze Mystères de Nostre Dame de Liesse* of Jean Louvet³ with the *Miracles de Nostre Dame par personnages*. There is great resemblance between the fourteenth century miracles and those of Louvet, but the atmosphere of the plays is different. In the fourteenth century there is a reverence for Mary as Queen of Heaven, and in praise of Her are sung the loveliest of rondeaux; in the sixteenth century plays there is no rondel, no "serventoy", nor even a sermon to praise the Patron of the society. These later plays use the Virgin only to solve the plot, and for their bid to public favor they bring in coarse scenes of realism.

One is practically certain of being correct in stating that the *Miracles de Nostre Dame* were performed in a closed hall. A natural place would be the hall in which the meetings of the guild were held, — a hall owned or rented; or a hall might have been rented specifically for the presentations. The plays must have been held within-doors, for the performances were given more often than otherwise on feast days that occurred during the winter months, and the climate of Northern France would not be very agreeable for outdoor pageants in February or even in March.⁴ Miracle No. 39, *Clovis*, has a stage direction reading:

² Petit de Julleville, *Les Mystères*, v. I, p. 121.

³ Wm. Lohmann, *Untersuchungen über Jean Louvets 12 Mysterien zu Ehren von Nostre Dame de Liesse*.

⁴ Wm. Creizenach, *Geschichte des Neueren Dramas*, v. I, p. 153. Creizenach here suggests as one proof that the plays were given in a closed hall, the manner in which they are ended. When the play is over, the actors leave the stage in procession. Sometimes special actors are called in (the dialogue furnishing the directions) and lead the procession off. "Ici jouent les Menesterez et s'en va le jeu."

"Ici s'en va hors de sa place, et, une petite intervalle faite,
s'en revient *en la sale*." (l. 1021)

Again,

"Ici vont derrière, et puis viennent *en sale*." (l. 1599)

Here the word "sale" would seem to indicate the closed-in hall, and these two stage directions would point towards the use of a background or backdrop of curtains across the whole back of the stage, so that one could go behind and then return "en sale". This curtain possibly formed the background on three sides of the stage and permitted three entrances or exits, one to the right, one to the left, and one in the rear center.⁵ The miniatures indicate a tapestried background of varying design.

Exact information is lacking on the size of the possible halls and meeting places in Paris and surrounding towns in the fourteenth century. One may assume a hall about forty feet wide and from sixty to one hundred feet long.⁶ The narrowness of the halls precludes the stage running lengthwise, as there would be no room for spectators, and, therefore, the width of the stage is determined by the width of the hall, presumably about 40 feet. It would need to be 20 feet deep and elevated above the level of the hall so as to make the scene visible to all and to enable the use of such devices as traps, and the building of the basin to represent the sea, which had to be set below the level of the stage floor. Daylight probably furnished most of the lighting, as the plays were, insofar as we are able to conjecture, given in the afternoon, beginning shortly after mid-day. Doubtless artificial lights, torches and candles, were used to help illuminate the scene, for darkness would come early in the winter months in the north of France.

From sketches of possible stage setting for each of the forty plays, I have found that the plays fall into three divisions. Almost

⁵ The openings which served as exits and entrances were probably open doorways, large enough to permit the horses, and in some instances, a cart, to be driven on and off stage easily. Of the forty plays, eighteen give good indication in the dialogue of the use of an entrance for such actors as devils, minstrels, pallbearers, and animals.

⁶ According to Viollet-le-Duc: *Dictionnaire Raisoné de l'Architecture Française du XI au XVI siècle*, v. VI, pp. 214-300 and v. VIII, pp. 71-94, the width of town houses varied from 5 meters to 20 meters. The large halls in some of the chateaux of the 13th to 15th centuries were from 50 meters long by 16 meters wide to 70 meters long by 27 meters wide. D. C. Stuart: *Stage Decoration in France*, Ch. 11, p. 188, gives the dimensions of the Hôpital de la Trinité as 12 meters by 42 meters, the Hotel de Bourgogne as built on a space 31 meters by 33 meters. One notes that the stage of the Hôpital de la Trinité therefore was not more than 12 meters or about 39 feet across.

the same stage could be used by any one play within each division. The divisions vary chiefly as the average number of mansions⁷ required. The number of mansions increases with the increase in dramatic technique, and the ever more frequent use of secular themes, and also with the probable greater frequency in change of authors towards the end of the repertoire of plays.

These three divisions comprise the following plays:

Division I includes Plays Nos. 1 through 14 inclusive,

Division II includes Plays Nos. 15 through 25 inclusive,

Division III includes Plays Nos. 26 through 40 inclusive.

Reference to the accompanying Chart A of Appendix II will show the relation between the number of mansions, the value in dramatic art, the theme, the use of stage directions, and also what I think may have been change in authors during this period. Some rather interesting facts are brought out. For example, Play No. 12, *La Marquise de la Gaudine*, is the first truly secular play. Its superior dramatic technique indicates that it had an authorship different from that of the preceding rather monotonous plays, the themes of which are chastity and the joys of the ascetic life; it is the first to reach a high point in dramatic interest. No. 15, *Enfant que Nostre Dame resucita*, is again a play of striking realism; any one reading this play would hardly doubt that it had a different author from the writer of Nos. 13 and 14, plays of torture and very ecclesiastical in tone. It has the most elaborate stage yet presented to that date, and is also high in dramatic interest.

In Division III one notes especially the high dramatic interest, greater number of mansions, larger percentage of secular themes, and (as seems probable) more frequent change of authors. Play No. 27, *Empereris de Rome*, is among those having most elaborate

⁷ In speaking hereinafter of stage setting, the following terms will be used with the connotations here given:

Mansion denotes a structure which may represent a house, a palace, a gate, temple, hermitage, chapel, heaven, hell,—in short, any construction which, as such, is essential to the action. Each player had "sa place" (cf. No. 39, l. 1021) where he was supposed to remain unless he was actively engaged in the action. This place was usually a mansion.

Champ denotes the open space before the mansions, the foreground of the stage. It represents variously streets of a city, a battlefield, a pilgrim route, etc.

Device represents special stage machinery, "secretz" or "trucs". Under such heading will be considered innovations and mechanical constructions, beheadings, speaking animals, etc.

Exit denotes the openings, one to left, one to right and one in the rear. (In a hall, such as the guild used, there were likely two entrances. One very possibly was behind the stage and it was through this entrance that horses and dogs were brought.)

setting; and also one which reaches a high point in dramatic technique. No. 37, *La Fille d'un Roy*, a play which imitates in varying detail an earlier play, No. 29, is outstanding in this group as being of secular theme in a group of purely ecclesiastical plays, as having quite certainly an author other than these religious plays had, as being most excellent technically and dramatically, and as having one of the few very elaborate settings.⁸

Taking up, then, the stage as it probably was constructed for plays Nos. 1 through 15, which I have grouped in Division I, we find:

3 plays requiring 7 mansions,
2 plays requiring 6 mansions,
5 plays requiring 5 mansions,
4 plays requiring 4 mansions.

The average number of mansions required is 5.4. A stage constructed for the first play, simple, with only the necessary mansions, probably served as pattern to authors writing for the ten to fourteen years following. Had we been in the audience the day when the first play of this collection was given before the guild, we should have seen a stage somewhat as follows: The width of the stage is forty feet, its depth some twenty feet.⁹ The back and side walls to the stage are hung with a heavy tapestried material of dark all-over pattern. In each side wall and in the background, are doorways which serve as entrances. To the spectator's left is the mansion of heaven. It is a scaffolding raised some six feet from the floor of the stage; rather steep stairs ascend from the champ, that is, the foreground, to the platform, which is about five feet square. There is also a stairway, hidden to the spectators, which ascends to heaven from the rear. There is a railing about this platform from which silken draperies hang to the floor, covering the rough boards of the scaffolding. These silks are pale blue or white, and, depending upon the season of the year, the structure may also be adorned with flowers or possibly

⁸ Chapter III undertakes an analysis of the action and composition of this play.

⁹ If one keeps in mind the traditions of preceding drama which had influence on the fourteenth century miracle plays, one remembers that a large stage was one such tradition. The mystery plays which were given outdoors had ample room in which to expand; and it would seem likely that these miracle plays started with as large a stage as they could command, taking into consideration the hall in which they were given, and that the stage was restricted as much as possible, rather than enlarged. Greater skill would lie in the staging of elaborate miracles on a limited stage, than in the staging of mysteries on an outdoor stage where more space was easily available. In this matter of restriction, the indoor stage, in the development of French drama, is at least as important as the outdoor stage, if not more important.

with fruits. Perhaps sometimes silver stars gleam among the folds of the silk, suggesting that Paradise does lie in realms above.¹⁰

To the spectator's extreme right is a house of one room. This mansion is about seven feet wide, has rough beams supporting a thatched roof, or roof of woven reeds, and three walls are made of cloth stretched between the upright posts. The fourth wall is open towards the audience, and we see within the mansion a couch. There is a curtain at this opening which may be drawn to hide the interior.¹¹ In the center of the stage, towards the back, stands a mansion representing the palace of the pope at Rome. It is merely an arch supported by two columns. It rises maybe eight feet high. These columns might be covered with red cloth to mark the structure as the palace of cardinals and popes. Under the arch is an armchair for His Holiness. Between the mansion of heaven and the mansion of Rome are two small houses some two and a half feet wide, representing hermitages. These are low structures, having a roof, and an open doorway facing the audience. Between the center mansion and the large house of the right stand a small hermitage and a mansion representing a chapel. This latter is probably only a high pointed arch, held up by beams. There hangs from this arch, falling behind the beams, a tapestry, and before the tapestry, under the arch, is a small altar.¹²

Chart B, attached, shows the floor-plan of the stage with the mansions drawn in proportion. The size we have assumed for the stage allows ample room for the mansions to remain almost on one alignment. It will be necessary in the stage of the more elaborate plays to locate some constructions somewhat behind others, i. e., have several alignments of mansions. It would seem, perhaps, as if too

¹⁰ The mansion of paradise, as likewise the mansion of hell, became in both mystery and miracle play practically fixed traditional constructions, the former to the spectator's left, the latter to his right. Down through the late mystery plays heaven seems to have been decorated much as it was in the *Représentation d'Adam* of the twelfth century. The miniatures give no help as to the probable appearance of heaven in *Les Miracles de Notre Dame par personnages*, of the Ms. Cangé.

¹¹ To support the existence and use of the curtain, we have such evidence as the miniature of the torture of St. Appolline of Fouquet, where we see the curtain which closed the mansion of heaven and which in the picture is looped to one side. We have further evidence in the record of the cost of rings to be used for the curtains on mansions in the *Passion de Mons*. See Gustave Cohen: *La Mystère de la Passion*, p. XLVIII, Planche IV, and p. 543. No curtain is shown in the miniatures of the Ms. Cangé.

¹² Many of the miniatures of our manuscript indicate the chapel as a mansion with walls, one of which is open to the audience. Within is an altar extending across the entire end of the chapel, and within the mansion is space for a person to kneel in prayer.

much space is allowed the champ, but one must remember that even in this first group of plays a cart drawn by a horse is brought on the stage.

Chart C shows a view of the stage as it would appear to the spectators. With very few exceptions the fronts of all the large mansions (some of which were divided into as many as three rooms) are open to the audience.¹³

The stage as drawn would be suitable for Play No. 1. Now let us take up the succeeding thirteen plays and see whether they could not be given on approximately the same set. In all plays, heaven appears unchanged in position.

Play No. 2 eliminates one small structure and divides the large house on the right into two rooms.

Play No. 3 eliminates one small, one large mansion, and adds to the chapel a door which opens.

Play No. 4 eliminates two small mansions and the chapel. It would add, in the place of the chapel, trees to represent a forest.

Play No. 5 eliminates two small mansions.

Play No. 6 eliminates only one small mansion.

Play No. 7 eliminates the three small mansions and adds trees.

Play No. 8 requires the identical setting of No. 1.

Play No. 9 requires the same setting as No. 1, with the chapel converted into a temple at Jerusalem.

Play No. 10 eliminates the three small mansions, and the large one to the spectator's right.

Play No. 11 eliminates two small mansions and adds trees.

Play No. 12 requires the addition of a prison with a door to the large mansion on the right; in place of the two small constructions to the left of the center mansion, there would be trees.

Plays Nos. 13 and 14 are the only plays of the group of forty which give any indication of a mansion representing hell. In No. 14 only is clear indication given, but such a construction would fit in well in No. 13. These plays are very simple, and would require heaven (No. 13 requires a small mansion near heaven), the large center mansion, the chapel, and a mansion representing hell to the right in place of the large house.

¹³ The prisons usually had barred doors which closed with a key. The door to the tower where Josaphat was imprisoned in No. 21 closed. The hut in No. 32 had a door which opened and closed.

Hell in these miracles had not yet developed into anything like the fearsome dragon mouth which we know from the mystery plays of later centuries. Hell in the *Miracles de Nostre Dame* was probably a mansion built perhaps to resemble a tower with iron door and grating through which could peer the faces of souls in torment. Most likely smoke now and then issued from the tower, along with the smell of sulphur, and the glow of coals shone through the grating. From the miniature at the beginning of Play No. 14 which shows St. Prist, St. Agnes, and St. Lawrence delivering the curate from hell, one notes that there is no mansion of hell. The two victims are shown amid flames, and three devils dance outside the flames. But interesting and valuable as this testimony is, this is not, of course, an assured picture of this play as represented.

In Division II, comprising Plays Nos. 15 through 25 inclusive:

- 2 plays require 8 mansions,
- 1 play requires 7 mansions,
- 6 plays require 6 mansions,
- 2 plays require 5 mansions.

The average number of mansions required is 6. The same stage as that shown on Chart C can be used to visualize the setting for these plays, with a few additional details for individual plays. The plays in this group become more complicated in the action or plot, and more interesting in the devices they use.

Play No. 15 adds only one small mansion.

Play No. 16 requires during the action the setting up upon the stage of one of the small houses near heaven.

Play No. 17 requires the addition of a construction to represent a hut in the desert.

Play No. 18 eliminates one small house near heaven and adds trees for a forest.

Play No. 19 requires no change from the stage as drawn.

Play No. 20 eliminates one small mansion and adds a baptismal font (a pool perhaps) in the foreground of the champ.

Play No. 21 converts the large mansion to the spectator's right into a tower with a door which locks, and a lofty window from which Josaphat can look out.

Play No. 22 eliminates one small mansion.

Play No. 23 requires no change.

Play No. 24 requires the elimination of the chapel and one small mansion.

Play No. 25 eliminates two small mansions and the chapel.

Division III, comprising Plays Nos. 26 through 40 inclusive, contains the greatest number of plays on worldly themes, and also includes plays with more complicated setting and unusual devices.

1 play requires 10 mansions,

2 plays require 9 mansions,

6 plays require 8 mansions,

4 plays require 7 mansions,

2 plays require 6 mansions.

The average number of mansions required is 8. Chart D shows the floor plan locating eight mansions and a basin for water to represent the sea. Chart E illustrates a stage suitable for this group of plays. From left to right we see:

- (1) Heaven is the same sort of structure as in all previous miracles of this collection. It might be rendered more beautiful by the addition of a canopy top of billowing silk painted to represent clouds or star-spangled heavens.
- (2) A small mansion serving as house or hermitage.
- (3) A larger mansion which might serve as an inn, a palace, temple, court, etc.
- (4) A large mansion which could serve as pope's palace, temple, inn, etc.
- (5) This construction represents the sea.¹⁴ A basin six feet by eight feet of masonry could be constructed below the level of the floor and filled with water. We have had instances in the mystery plays of the representation of the sea upon the stage, both for the scene where Christ walked upon the water and for the Resurrection Plays where the sea gives up the bodies of the dead. It would seem the natural thing that the actors of the guild would seek to use upon the stage the same equipment used in life, and so they would try to have an actual small skiff upon the water even though there were not room to row a boatlength.
- (6) This mansion represents an inn, or a house of some person of importance.

¹⁴ Gustave Cohen: *Mise en Scène dans le Théâtre Religieux*, p. 155; *Le Mystère de la Passion*, p. 576. Among the items listed in the "Dépenses de la Passion de Mons," 1501, we find rent paid to a certain man for "1 petit baquet de bois mis sur la mer". This word "baquet" is defined by Cohen in footnote 4 as a small boat which navigates on a canal or river to transport merchandise.

- (7) The smaller mansions represent variously hermitages, domiciles of merchants, notaries, midwives, and messengers. These mansions consist of little more than a doorway.
- (8) The chapel is found in almost every play of the forty. Usually it requires an altar within, but it need not be more than an archway, with altar in the doorway.
- (9) This mansion is usually one of importance, and in this group in three instances (Nos. 27, 28, 32) it consists of a room open to view of the audience, and provided with a bed, and of a small prison with a door which locks. Sometimes this mansion is divided into two rooms both open to the audience.

The larger mansions have become more pretentious in appearance. Those representing Jerusalem or Constantinople make some attempt at reproducing the probable architecture of those places as imagined by artists and scene builders of the fourteenth century.¹⁵ Some mansions of especially good construction and unusually attractive design could be and probably were preserved for use in later plays. It is quite conceivable that this stage setting remained in place from year to year, or, if the guild needed the space for its meetings, the mansions could be moved back against the walls, or taken to pieces and stored until needed.

The plays in this group would each use most of and sometimes all of these mansions, but because each play in this third division is more individualistic, and because many of the plays introduce some innovation in device or in construction, it will be best to review each miracle from No. 26 to No. 40 and note what additions or changes would have to be made in this stage.

Play No. 26 eliminates Mansions (4) and (7) and converts the prison of Mansion (9) into a cellar where the murder is committed.

Play No. 27 uses the stage exactly as drawn.

Play No. 28 needs a construction to represent the town of Burgos, a combination of fortification with a

¹⁵ In the preparation of the stage, those responsible for the production of the play engaged a "constructeur de secretz" to build the "échaufauds" or mansions. See Chas. Aubertin: *Histoire de la Langue et de la Littérature au Moyen Age*, v. I, Ch. III, Pt. II, pp. 437-40.

G. Bapst: *Essai sur l'Histoire du Théâtre*, Livre I, Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9. Bapst here says that the earliest mention which he has found of a painter employed to decorate the mystery plays falls in the year 1379. The best artists and artisans did not consider it in the least beneath them to design for the stage. Painters sometimes worked up the settings and mansions in miniature and then the "constructeur" and his workmen built the structures on large scale.

gate which can be shut and walls from which defenders throw stones, and a palace wherein is visible the living apartments. No sea or ship is needed.

Play No. 29 uses the stage as diagrammed. The chapel is not required, but a mansion to serve as prison takes its place.

Plays Nos. 30 and 31. Strange to say, Play No. 30, written most probably, if not by a cleric, at least under strong ecclesiastical influence, and No. 31, a play of epic theme, resemble each other greatly as to setting. The mansion to the spectator's right in No. 30 is of flimsy construction to represent the hermit's hut, and is burned to the ground during the play. A forest replaces Mansions (6) and (7) in the diagram. No sea is required. A well with curbing of stone is near the hermitage. In No. 31 we find the forest again replacing Mansions (6) and (7). Mansion (2) represents a palace and might be as in the diagram. A small mansion representing a hut would appear in the forest.

Play No. 32 requires a stage exactly as shown, with the exception of trees in the place of mansion (7) and around and about the chapel. The sea is required here.

Play No. 33 could use the stage as pictured, changing mansion (6) to two very small hermitages and adding trees near the chapel. No sea is required.

Play No. 34 would have no need for mansions (6) and (7). Otherwise the setting remains as shown.

Play No. 35 would not need mansion (2) or (7), nor the ship. The sea, however, is required in the play.

Play No. 36 could use the pictured stage, omitting mansion (7) and adding trees. Sea is required.

Play No. 37 is one of the most elaborate of all the plays and one in which the technique of writing and staging reaches its highest point in the forty miracles. Yet even here very slight change is necessary in the setting we have been using. Mansions (4) and (6) would exchange places so that (6), more suitable as an inn, would logically be next to the palace at Constantinople (3). In place of mansion (7) there would be trees. A pool suitable for bathing, with trees near by,

would be located in the champ to the left. The sea is required.

Play No. 38 has a more simple setting and would omit entirely mansions (6), (7), (8), and the sea.

Play No. 39 would use all mansions except (2). The sea would be used as a baptismal pool.

Play No. 40 would use the same stage with the substitution of two small mansions in place of mansion (6) and mansion (7), and trees near the chapel.

One notes how this final stage, which serves for the most elaborate of the plays, is a very readily recognizable transformation or enlargement of the earlier one. This stage of Chart E, with nine or ten mansions, and at times a sea, trees, and a pool, is a natural outgrowth of the first stage, which was of the same scheme but fewer mansions.¹⁶ A spectator who saw only a few of the first and a few of the last plays would still recognize the early stage, only a little amplified, despite the incomparably greater elaboration and progress of dramatic action in the later plays.

When one first reads through the *Miracles de Nostre Dame*, one is likely to imagine that the stage setting must be very complicated and difficult indeed to achieve, especially on an indoor stage. But upon analysis of the plays, one sees that they could be given on a limited stage, and that the authors of the later plays were probably to a considerable extent influenced by the setting and the arrangement developed by earlier dramatists. This restricted space for action helped to develop in the technique of the play-writing of these miracles the essentially French traits of unity of action, concentration, and symmetry.

¹⁶ Throughout these brief descriptions of stage settings for each of the forty plays it is not intended to suggest that the location of each mansion remained in every instance rigidly the same (with the exception of such eliminations or additions as may be indicated). The mansions were all of light construction and could be easily shifted, and probably were moved so as to afford, as is necessary in one instance, a passage between two houses sufficient for the entrance of a horse and cart. This slight shifting varies, of course, according to the needs of individual plays; but the great number of instances in which there is required no change in position of mansions, is worthy of note.

CHAPTER II.

To appreciate the staging of these miracles, one must, in addition to the general plan of the stage already treated, consider the devices or "secretz" wherein is shown the ingenuity of the authors (sometimes the lack of inventiveness, for some authors copy a successful trick of an earlier dramatist), and also the extent to which one play imitates another. Through study of these devices and by investigation of textual copying and of the extent to which one play is an outgrowth of all the preceding plays, one can see how authors ventured to incorporate features which added greater realism to their work, and which made the plays increasingly more interesting (because more elaborate) and developed to a higher degree actual dramatic technique.

The accompanying Chart F lists the various devices, the plays in which they are to be found, and gives the total number of plays in which each device occurs. From this chart one learns the greater extent to which the secular play originated the unusual in setting or action, an elaboration used thereafter not only by the secular plays but by the religious plays as well. One notes likewise the frequent instances in which a device new and pleasing to the spectators is repeated by closely succeeding plays. For example, the prison is introduced in No. 12. It is used continually (except for four plays) from Nos. 21 to 32. Torture scenes occur in Nos. 13, 14, 22, 24, and 25. The chair for the Virgin is in Nos. 10, 13, and 14. The horse appears in Nos. 28, 30, 31, 32; the dog in Nos. 30, 31, 32, and 33.

The device of fire was not new to the stage of the fourteenth century. It had previously been used as one of the principal accessories of the role of the devil, along with cannons and flashes of gunpowder. In the *Miracles de Nostre Dame* we have fire used as a means of torture, to burn transgressors at the stake, to destroy a hut, and to burn a woman tied to a couch. In No. 4, *La femme du roy de Portugal*,¹ the queen had substituted her cousin for herself on the wedding night, and when, next morning, the cousin refused to yield her place, the queen tied the woman down, and set fire to the bed.

¹*Les Miracles de Nostre Dame par personnages*, ed. G. Paris, and U. Robert, Soc. des Anciens Textes.

The illusion of burning the couch could be accomplished with fair ease, for behind the smoke the cousin could unharmed escape through Exit

(a). The queen says,

1. 1010 Un murtre sur mon droit fait ay
Et encore un autre en feray.
Ains que ma cousine s'eveille,
Qui delez mon seigneur someille,
Son pie lieray a la couche (here she probably
Si li estoupperay la bouche, tied the woman)
Si qu'elle ne pourra parler; (here gagged her)
Et puis iray le feu bouter,
En la couche par devers li. (Sets fire to the
bed.)
.....
Or, tost, levez sus, mon seigneur,
Et si vous vestez sans demour
Car nous ardons.

The fire probably did not destroy the mansion for, although the queen says, speaking of the room,

1. 1036 Où li feux est de toutes pars,
Esgardez conme il est espars
Par là dedans.

it was likely the wish of the actors to give the illusion of a great fire, but not to endanger the stage.

In No. 30, *St. Jehan le Paulu*, the hermit burned the hut where his sin was committed. This small structure was probably very flimsily built of rafters and reeds, which would flare up and die down without danger to other mansions on the stage.² In No. 28, *Oton, roy d'Espagne*, during the siege of Burgos, a knight of the emperor sets fire to the gate of the city.

1. 394 Je vois bouter le feu sanz faille
A celle porte ardoir, tandis
Qu'il sont a combatre ententiz,
C'est fait, elle art.

The gate was probably a woven bulwark of reeds and rushes, which would burn quickly and give the appearance of great flames.

The fires at the stake in Nos. 12, 15, and 29 are easily managed. In these three plays the Virgin intervenes before the victim is tied to the stake. In No. 12 and No. 15, the fire is brought by torch and the executioners are ready to light the pyre when the rescue is effected.

² There was always the danger of fire getting beyond control; probably in the case of the burning of a mansion, such as the hermitage in No. 30, the construction was very lightly built, and stood rather apart from other mansions. The floor about the hut was perhaps soaked well with water before the performance, or other means of protection used.

In No. 29 the executioners commissioned by the king to burn the latter's daughter have mercy on her and set her adrift in a boat; they then build a fire and tell the king, who sees the smoke, that they have done his bidding.

No. 26, *Une femme que Nostre Dame garda d'estre arse*, is among the most interesting of the plays dealing with fire. Guibour, who has had her son-in-law murdered, is condemned to be burned. The executioners take her, bind her tightly to the stake by the wrists:

1. 1029 Cochet, pense de toy haster
Puisque liée est de fors hars,
Couche sur lui de toutes pars
Largement et busche et estrain
Et puis le feu y boute a plain
Pour tost esprandre.

The executioner gets the fire and touches the torch to the pyre.

1. 1076 Alumer vueil par telx efforts
Ce feu, puisque j'ay la matière
Qu'il fauldra c'on se traie arrière
De touz costez.

That is, the fire is lighted and burns hotly and the witnesses draw back. The fire has been placed in a semi-circle in front of the victim; it does not surround her, but it hides her by its flame and smoke. If she were on her knees, the smoke would not have to rise very high to obscure her. Then the Virgin and her angels descend and approach the fire and the Virgin orders Michael and Gabriel to pull the burning brands away. The angels pull the sticks apart and the fire dies down. We see the woman kneeling unhurt; she has unfastened the bonds that held her hands. The executioner approaches, sure that the woman is dead:

1. 1096 Certainement je ne croy mie
Que ne soit arse ceste femme;
Trop a getté ce feu grant flame
Et trop ruvesche.

But the astonished executioner finds

1. 1104 ses liens rouz,
Ses cordes et toutes ses hars;
Rien n'y a que tout ne soit ars;
Mais elle encore est toute saine.

When the bailiff orders more fire piled on, the Virgin forbids the

fire to burn, and the angels pull it back again.³ Those present then acknowledge a miracle.

In Nos. 14, 22, and 38 fire is used as torture. Here the stage devices were probably much the same as in the mystery plays where there was more smoke than fire.⁴ In No. 14 the unworthy prelate is within the mansion of hell,⁵ and about him one sees smoke and now and then a flame.

- l. 478 Qui cy me tient en ceste paine
C'un petit lache sa rigueur.
Trop m'est grieve ceste douleur.
Et ce feu trop ardente et chaut.
Las, las, que ce souffrir me fault.

In No. 22, St. Panthaleon fearlessly enters the boiling caldron. The water, of course, was not hot, but a genuine fire burned beneath it. In No. 38, we meet a more difficult task of the roasting alive of St. Lawrence, who is bound tightly to an iron grill.

- l. 2032 Or tost à vos forches boutez
Charbon et feu soubz ce rostier,
Si qu'ainsi soit cuit tout entier
Son corps et ars.

The saint, on the rack, says,

- l. 2050 Tirant cruel et dolereux
Qui si me martires sanz cause,
Voiz qu'en moy ce feu cy ne cause
Chaleur nulle desordenée,
Mais est en moy conme rousée.

The saint may have been lying on some boards which did not show to the audience, or the fire might have been built not directly under him, but a little behind the rack, yet near enough to give the illusion of being under the saint.

Closely related to the device of fire is the realistic way in which the torture scenes are staged. In Play No. 6, *St. Jehan Chrysothome*, the saint has his hand cut off at the wrist.

³ The angels would probably have sword or spear with which to rake apart the embers. The miniature shows the angels pulling back the brands. One notes that the flames are not high and that the victim is not entirely obscured by smoke; a concession not needed for those who had seen the victim on the stage.

⁴ A good thick sulphur smoke and a few flashes of powder would create a sufficiently unpleasant and even terrifying hell to satisfy a fourteenth century spectator at a play.

⁵ The miniature indicates no mansion representing hell. The prelate is merely surrounded (to all appearances) by smoke and flame and devils.

1. 1251 Par Dieu (says the emperor) le poing et l'eveschie
Tout ensemble vous osteray.

.....
Jehan, agenoillez vous cy;
ca, celle main.

At this point the knight cuts the hand off. This, and the hand cut off in No. 29, and the beheadings in Nos. 22, 24, 25, are probably effected in the same way as in the mystery plays. Every item of the torture and beheading scene has to be in full view of the audience. The usual manner of beheading was to substitute for the actor, at the moment of execution, a dummy.⁶ It would be possible in the rough handling which the victim doubtless underwent at the hands of his torturers, to throw the victim to the ground at a point where the dummy is lying unseen by the audience, and then to raise the dummy up and behead it. Within the neck of this figure may be concealed a skin of reddened water, to pour forth as blood when the head falls.

In No. 9 we find the devils torturing St. William-of-the-Desert by beating him with clubs. These clubs, huge and knotty, are stuffed with cloth and painted to resemble wood.

One of the most revolting of torture scenes in the whole collection is the one in No. 34 in which the king and queen punish their sons who had rebelled against the absent father, by having their thighs deeply burned by hot irons, so that they are paralyzed for life. Of course, in the matter of staging, this could easily be feigned. This scene is vividly pictured in the miniature.

In No. 23, the scene of the cutting of the throats of his two children by Amille, in order to get the blood with which to cure his leprous friend, Amis, is closely allied in mechanical device to the torture scenes.

1. 1705 La gorge en l'eure copperay
Et en ce bacin recevray
Le sanc qui de li ystera.

⁶ Gustave Cohen: *La Mise en Scène dans le Théâtre Religieux au Moyen Age*, p. 149.

Petit de Julleville: *Les Mystères*, v. I, p. 400. Petit de Julleville suggests the substitution of a dummy was made by use of a trap at the spot where the victim was forced to kneel. Having this statement in mind, one notes in the text in all instances of beheadings and the cutting off of hands, that the victim is told "mettez vous là".

J. M. Mortensen: *Le Théâtre français au Moyen Age*, p. 180. When it was desired to roast a saint, "on attachait l'acteur à une table dont la desus était mobile sur des chevilles, on jetait sur lui un drap, et on faisait basculer la table de telle sorte que le mannequin fixé de l'autre côté venait remplacer l'acteur."

The miniatures often illustrate the beheading or the torture scene, but naturally the artist portrays the victim as a living person.

Here the father pretends to cut the throat of one son.

1. 1708 C'est fait, jamais ne parlera;
Il est braiement trespassez,
Et si a getté sanc assez.

The same occurs with the second child. The actors taking the parts of the sons might have a small bag containing red liquid tied to their throats which the father pierces. The illusion here is not so difficult to create.

The mansion of the prison is one device which added much to the realism of the plays, and which evidently had such success in its first use in No. 12 that the author of the next play of worldly theme, No. 15, most probably re-read No. 12 and used the prison scene. Then beginning with No. 21, the first of the following plays having a plot which could well use a prison, we find this device frequently used. There is no doubt that the mansion representing the prison closed with a door and that the prisoner actually entered into it.⁷

- Play No. 12, l. 466 Certes vous venrey en prison.
l. 487 Et savoir qu'est prison fermée,
Entrez ens tost, sanz demourée.

- Play No. 15, l. 715 Ou vraiment je t'enmeneray
Avec moi et si te mettray
En fort prison.
l. 888 Or tost, Tristan, leens l'enserre,
Se qu'elle n'ysse.
Sire, je n'ay pas cuer si nice
Qu'ouvert li laisse huis ne fenestre,
Entrez, dame, ycy vous fault estre
Un po de temps.

The imprisoned woman then speaks through the bars of the door. In No. 23, the Louvre is mentioned as a prison:

- l. 321 Je vueil qu'au Louvre les me mainnent
Et conme gardes les demainent.

In No. 24 we meet again the prison with a door. This door evidently was solid and no light could enter the prison when it was closed.

- l. 376 Sa, sa, boutez vous par cest huis;
Or demenez la voz deduiz
Hardiement.
Il peut bien dire vraiment
Qu'il est en lieu obscur et noir

⁷ The miniatures nowhere show a construction representing a prison. This is explained by the fact that the artist sought to picture the most important scene or the scene of the miracle, and such action did not take place in or before the prisons.

Et où clarté ne peut avoir
De nulle part.

The door closed with a bolt:

1. 386 Je ne doute point qu'il escape;
L'uis est trop fort, si est l'agrappe
De la serrure.

Another interesting reference to Paris lies in the use of the names of two Parisian prisons (or perhaps the names of two famous cells in a prison) in No. 26.

1. 690 si me met
Tout avant oeuvre en *la Gourdain*
Sa mère; et puis la fille maine
D'autre costé en *Paradis*.

An example of how clearly the text many times serves as stage direction is seen in No. 27:

1. 747 Fermez me cel huis tellement
Qu'il ne puist yssir nullement.

The putting of a childbirth scene upon the stage was not original with the *Miracles de Nostre Dame*, but in this collection it has become almost a "stock scene". In each case the mother is attended by another woman, a demoiselle, a mother-in-law, or a midwife. The Virgin herself acts as midwife for the abbess in No. 2. The Virgin, in the Nativity Play, No. 5, is attended by another woman. In each case the mother enters one of the mansions and a curtain may be drawn for a few moments, or her attendants may shield her from the spectators. There is hidden on the couch where the mother lies, a doll, which is later held up to view of all as the new-born infant.

In Nos. 1, 2, 5, 18, 30, 39, plays of distinctly ecclesiastic nature, the scene of childbirth is short. But in Nos. 15, 29, 32, and 37, all very secular plays, the agony is prolonged and almost the identical words are used. Inasmuch as we shall later note the textual and theme resemblances between Nos. 29, 32, and 37, we shall note here only that the realism of the birth scene in No. 29 evidently made a strong impression on the audience and the later authors were conscious of its value.

Another device which the miracles took over from the strictly religious drama was the idea of representing the soul as a thing separate from the dead body; the soul probably was represented as a small

doll, clothed in white, which the actor released from the folds of his dress when he "died".⁸

In No. 6, when the saintly Anthure is dying, the angel Michael says to Gabriel:

1. 1522 Gabriel, ne nous targons mie;
Allons querre appertement l'âme
D'Anthure, celle sainte femme
Qui se trespasse.

Amid the lamentations of her mother and her son, the angels take up the soul and carry it to heaven.

1. 1566 Portons devant la trinité
Gabriel, ceste âme en chantant.

Upon the death of St. William in No. 9, Dieu orders St. Agnes and St. Christine to take up the soul:

1. 1396 Je vueil, Agnes, et vous, Christine,
Que vous deux ja l'âme prenez,
.....
Ralons nous en nostre lieu (i. e., heaven)
Mes Amis, puis que l'âme avez
De mon sergent, et si chantez
A hault voiz.

In No. 14, Dieu sends his angels to get a soul which is already in hell. Here it would seem that the whole man, corporal body as well as soul, is taken up by the angels for he is given a hermitage in heaven.

1. 1303 Vous deux anges, alez le querre;
Or tost, et cy endroit bonne erre
L'âme apportez.

The arch-deacon asks the angels who go to do God's bidding:

1. 1311 Qui estes vous, mes amis doux,
Ni ou iray?
Mon ami, je le te diray;
En gloire avec les sains preudommes
Saches nous deux, qui anges sommes

⁸ Gustave Cohen: *La Mise en Scène dans le Théâtre Religieux au Moyen Age*, p. 146.

Gustave Cohen: *La Mystère de la Passion*, p. CVIII, Ch. VI. Cohen here states that the soul, in accordance with early Christian tradition, was usually represented by a doll or a bird; the bird was sometimes made of pasteboard.

E. Mâle: *L'Art religieux de la fin du Moyen Age en France*, p. 378. Here is shown a miniature of a Latin Ms. 9471, Bibliothèque Nationale. The dead body lies on the earth; God looks down from heaven; the angel Michael, sword in hand, disputes with the Devil the soul here represented as a small white body (i. e., a doll figure) which, at this moment, is in the arms of the Devil.

The miniature accompanying Play No. 24 shows the small, naked body representing the soul of St. Ignatius (whose corpse lies on the ground) being carried upwards by two angels.

Ti porterons.

.....
Or ca, vezcy l'âme, vray Diex,
Que demandez.

Here it is necessary that the angels carry the body up to heaven; and this could be done, although not with great ease, for the stairs to heaven are steep and the worldly cleric doubtless weighed heavily.

In No. 13, the Virgin orders St. Mercury to kill the Emperor Julien, which the saint does, with the words:

1. 655 Homs de Dieu maudit et hais
De ton sanc sera taint le fer
De ceste lance; ore en enfer
Et âme et corps.

The devils then hasten to secure body and soul.

1. 675 Au mains alons prendre de fait
Le corp et l'âme Julien;
Si l'emportons, car tu scez bien
Nostre est pieca.
Ma brouete vueil menez là,
Si que dedans le jetterons
Et en enfer l'entraînerons
Sans plus attendre.
Avant contre moy te fault prendre
Pour le mettre en celle brouette,
Sa, puis qu'il y est, a grant feste
L'entraînerons.

These lines suggest that quite a bit of the ridiculous may have been used, with humorous intent, in this scene where the devils, with much pulling and hauling, lift the inert body (with soul still in it) into their wheel-barrow, and trundle it to hell.

Another case where soul and body intact are carried to hell, is in No. 25 when the devils seize the body of the emperor who strangled on a bone, and spirit it away unnoticed by the emperor's followers:⁹

1. 1262 Avant tost, nous deux par accort,
Sathan, prenons cest emperiere.
.....
Il fault qu'en enfer le livrons
Si que tost nous en delivrons;
Enportons l'en.
Il ne revendra de ceste an
Ne jamais, tant a il empris,
Puis que saisi l'avons et pris
Et que l'emport.

⁹ The miniature shows the devils in the act of seizing the emperor as he sits at table.

The emperor's son wonders at the disappearance of the body:

1. 1278 Et si sommes si avuglez
Que nul de nous, ce me recors,
Ne scet qu'est devenu son corps;
C'est grant merveille.

It is only in certain saint's plays that the question is brought up as to what form the soul took. It does not seem likely that the soul took the form of a dove or bird (which is pulled upward on a thread, as was frequently the case in the mystery plays) for the angels always speak of carrying the soul. Therefore, it seems to have been either a dummy body, clothed in white, or black if a wicked soul, or a small doll. One inclines to the doll theory, as a more traditional means of representing that small, non-lifelike thing, the very essence of the person, which escapes from the mouth of the dying. In the secular plays, when a person dies, there is no mention as to the disposition of the soul.

One of the novelties introduced by a secular play which adds to the realism of the stage and which is more difficult to handle is the horse. Horses appear in seven plays: Nos. 12, 18, 23, 28, 30, 31, 32. A donkey appears in No. 16. It is probable that the horses were left behind the scenes as much as possible.¹⁰ For example, in Play No. 7:

1. 817 Prenez en l'estable un cheval.
and in Play No. 11:

1. 174 Et les chevaux et le harnois
A la chapelle s'en iront,
Chez Jaquet là vous attendront.

When brought on the stage, they were kept as short a time as possible, and led back off-stage, "to the stable". M. Roy even questions whether they were not horses on wheels, mechanical devices like the serpent of No. 22, or the lions of No. 24, or the deer of No. 37. Yet later, M. Roy says there was nothing to prevent the actors from having well trained horses such as are known to have been ridden into the banquet hall before the king.¹¹

The first horse brought upon the stage is in No. 12, *La Marquise de la Gaudine*. This play, one remembers, is the first to reach a high point in dramatic interest. While part of this increase of interest is due to the theme and the more skilled manner in which the author

¹⁰ Emile Roy: *Etudes sur le Théâtre français du XIV et XV siècle*, p. CXXXV.

¹¹ Emile Roy: *Etudes sur le Théâtre français du XIV et XV siècle*, p. CXXXVII, and note c.

has presented his material, part is also due to the very human emotions and realistic setting. The entrance of the horse, harnessed to a small cart, to carry the condemned to the stake, doubtless aroused a great response among the spectators. There is the stage direction contained in the text:

1. 1152 Le bourrel tout à pié ira
Devant, la charette menant.

Again in

1. 1164 Bourrel, voz ce cheval saisir
Et le maine se com tu dois.

But when later the champion of the maligned marquise entered on horseback to fight for her honor, the two combattants quickly dismounted,

1. 1225 Car le champ a pié se fera;

and the horses are disposed of behind the scenes. Obviously a combat on horseback was impossible on the narrow confines of this stage.¹²

In No. 18, Theodore goes on horseback to get the supply of oil for the convent.

1. 550 Sire je vais le cheval querre
Si l'en menray avecque moi.

The actor then gets the horse, probably from the rear entrance, rides perhaps ten feet, dismounts and has the horse stabled.

1. 686 Ce cheval menray en l'estable.
1. 710 Vostre cheval si a littière,
Jusqu'au genoil et plus encore.

The next morning:

1. 850 Que mon cheval brousse m'amaines
Ycy devant.

When Theodore reaches the convent after the return trip of ten feet, the first thought again is to get rid of the horse.

1. 861 Je vais mon cheval destrousser,
Establer, froter, et brousser,
Et sa prouvende li donnray.

In No. 23, the combattants get their horses, probably mount and ride onto the stage, but fight on foot.

1. 1055 Que descendez a pié tous deux.

Whereupon the horses are led off, not to reappear. The same sort of

¹² The miniature accompanying this play shows a small two-wheeled cart drawn by a horse. Seated in the cart is the woman with her hands tied. The executioner is pictured as riding the horse, this not in accordance with lines 1152-3 of the text. The knight is shown mounted on his steed, and another man, possibly the marquis, is riding another horse beside the cart.

scene occurs in No. 28, where there is a combat, when the king orders:

- l. 1843 Que descendez touz deux a terre,
Voz chevaulx renoiez bonne erre
Delivrement.

In No. 30 occurs a hunting scene when the king and his daughter start out mounted. Here, although the party may have numbered up to six courtiers, only the king and his daughter were mounted. The king almost at once rides off stage (supposedly into the forest) and the daughter remains mounted before the hermitage of Jehan le Paulu. There she is invited to dismount.

- l. 465 Dame, descendez a court plait.
The servant takes the horse away at once:

- l. 473 Ce cheval vueil en cure prendre,
Laissiez le moy.

In No. 31, the king and his knights go hunting:

- l. 2227 Alez vous montez sanz demeure,
Et m'amenez la un courcier;
En l'eure nous irons lancier,
Se suis monté.

The horse is immediately brought from behind the mansions:

- l. 2231 Le courcier est tout apresté:
Venez montez.

It would seem here that perhaps three men were mounted:

- l. 2251 Seigneurs, a chemin nous fault mettre,
Puisque dessus noz chevalx sommes.

The cart and horse enter again in Play No. 32, as well as riding horses. E. Roy¹³ suggests that there were three horses harnessed to three charcoal burners' carts, not counting mounts. The text from line 1041 to line 1088 seems to indicate three horses. Certainly they would fill the champ, and one notes how quickly the three sons lead off their horses and stable them for the night.

It seems plausible that the actors would think of using real horses, for Froissart records a joust between two fully armed and mounted knights which took place in a banquet hall during the festivals of 1389. If horses could enter banquet halls, they could tread the boards. Also, it is doubtful whether the ever present French feeling for the ludicrous would have preserved the serious character of these scenes if mechanical horses had been used.

¹³ E. Roy: *Etudes sur le Théâtre du XIV et XV siècle*, p. CXXXV, note a.

The use of a donkey in No. 16 offers no difficulty; a donkey is small, and, unless he becomes suddenly obstinate, can be easily led across the stage.

There might be a doubt as to whether the animals (ox and donkey certainly) which are present in the stable in the nativity scene of Play No. 5 are real animals or only imitations. It is quite possible that they are alive; an ingenious "constructeur de secretz" might even surround the manger-bed, in which lies the doll-child, with enticing herbs, so that the beasts would have the appearance of lowering their heads in submission to the newborn Lord.¹⁴

The dogs which are brought on in hunting scenes in Nos. 4, 30, 31, 32, and the single dog which appears in No. 33, and from which Robert le Diable takes away a bone for his own sustenance, are also devices which add greatly to the interest of the staged play. Naturally, when it is a question of a speaking animal, or one which accomplishes some supernatural action, the animal was a "feint", a mechanical device. We have again Froissart as an eye-witness to some of these ingeniously constructed animals which were used in the pageants of 1389 in honor of Isabel of Bavaria.¹⁵ As Froissart explains one particular white deer, "il estoit tellement fait et composé qu'il y avait homme qu'on ne voyait point qui lui faisait remuer les yeux, les cornes, la bouche." The deer had been a special favorite with Charles VI since a certain marvelous dream which the king had in 1382. From reference to the probable dates of composition of these miracle plays, set by Magnin at 1345-1380, one is inclined to see in the white deer of Play No. 37 (the date of the composition of which might have been as late as 1385) a reflection upon the stage of a device which was most popular in the spectacles of that time, both with king and populace.

But to return to the dog. Play No. 4 opens with the request of the King that his hunting dogs be brought. The senechal replies:

1. 9 En ce bois là a lievres grans
 Et de grosses bestes assez;
 Se cerf ou dains avoir voulez
 Vos chiens grans acoupler iray
 Après nous mener les feray
 Si chacerons.

¹⁴ Gustave Cohen: *La Mystère de la Passion*, p. CXVIII.

The miniature shows the manger of woven reeds, filled with hay or straw on which the Child is lying. The ox very plainly is munching the hay.

¹⁵ Froissart: *Chronicles*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, t. X, pp. 68-71.

But the king does not want the "grans chiens",

1. 15 Amis, nul grant chien n'y menerons,
Faites y un levrier mener
Ou deux sanz plus.

So then two "levriers" are brought on leash,

1. 21 Vez cy les levriers acouplez.

When the hare is sighted, the hunters are now well back on the stage into the woods; they pretend most probably to release the dogs and they leave the stage in supposed pursuit of the game.

1. 64 Après, après, il va de là!

The next time the dogs appear, it is in four consecutive plays, Nos. 30, 31, 32, and 33. One would almost suspect that some one was the owner of a superb, well-trained pack of hunting dogs, perhaps as many as six of which were used on the stage. After these dogs were so successfully used in No. 30, the authors of No. 31 and No. 32 likewise wished to take advantage of that touch of interesting reality.

In No. 30, evidently there are as many as six dogs, three men in the suite of the king having two dogs each on leash. The sergeant goes to get the dogs, which are off-stage:

1. 189 Nous vous faisons conmandement,
Seigneurs, que voz roiz, voz levriers,
Voz chiens de trace et voz lemiens
Menez au bois tost sanz laissiez,
Il nous convient aler chacier.

They divide the dogs among the party when starting into the forest:

1. 225 Ces chiens nous fault mettre en arroy:
A ce vous convient regarder
Ces deux, et vous aler garder
Ce bout là; je demourray ici
Et garderay ces deux aussi
En ce carrefour de sentiers;
Et si je voy qu'il soit mestiers,
En l'eure les decoupleray,
D'ensemble, et aler les lairay
Suivre leur proie.

So the three men, with probably two dogs each on leash, take up their places of watch. They sound the horn, sight the deer in imagination, and disappear through the forest at once to take the dogs off-stage. It is not necessary to unleash the dogs.

In No. 31, there is again the hunting scene in which the king, Pepin, is lost in the woods and finds his real wife, Berte, living with the woodcutter's family. I think it is possible that dogs accompanied the hunting party, although no specific mention is made in the text. In No. 32, King Thierry desires to go hunting, and the sergeant orders the dogs brought:

1. 1134 Seigneurs, il vous fault tout laisser
Pour venir en au boys chacier;
Mettez tost voz chiens en arroy,

The plan is for the king and his knights to meet the hunters with the dogs in the forest.

1. 1145 Les veneurs, ne vous en doubtez
Et les chiens au bois trouverez.

They see the hunters in the forest where they are standing, holding the dogs on leash; then the game is sighted and the party goes in pursuit. Here, as in No. 31, no specific mention of the dogs is made in the dialogue, but probably the hunting scene by now would not seem to the spectators complete without the dogs.

The dog in No. 33, *Robert le Diable*, would have to be, at least to some degree, trained for the part. One of the conditions of the penance of Robert is that he shall eat only such meat as he can take away from the dogs. When the emperor throws a bone to his dog:

1. 1498 Louvet, Louvet, tien, Louvet, tien:
Runge cela.

Robert, playing the fool and mute, runs to take the bone from the dog:

1. 1500 Regardez, au chien s'en va là.
Oster li veult son os sanz faille,
Et le chien aux dens, qu'il ne faille,
Le tient forment.

Robert takes the bone from the dog, likewise the bread which the emperor throws down. It seems to me possible that an intelligent dog could have been trained to wrestle in play. Yet, unless it were an exceptional dog, it is likely that it was an imitation bone. Perhaps the actor who plays the part of Robert, is accompanied by his own dog; in the miniature of this play one notes the dog sleeping quite peacefully beside Robert. Nowhere else in the miniatures does the dog appear.

E. Roy says that descriptions of chroniclers show us how very well made were the deer, the eagle, and the lion who took part in one of the famous spectacles of this period, and indicate that they were

used side by side with living animals.¹⁶ So one can assume that the lions of No. 24 are imitation lions.¹⁷ There are only two of them:

1. 1083 Je vueil que de ces deux lions
Soit devorez.....

They, as the dogs, are on a leash; they have great teeth:

1. 1103 A estre molu par les dens
De ces lions.

Here the lions are loosened and urged on the prostrate St. Ignatius, while the attendants, feigning fear, withdraw to a safe distance, all except the keeper of the lions. But the animals merely sniff the body; then they are put on leash again and led away. These two lions were likely men in lions skins, with perhaps the lion's mouth open showing exaggerated teeth.¹⁸ Only if men were inside could the lions be made to appear to rush upon the man when they were released, and then sniff uninterestedly and permit themselves to be led away.

While on the subject of mechanical animals, one should mention the serpent in No. 22, which pursued a young child across the stage, "bouche bé", until killed by a prayer of St. Panthaleon to the God of the Christians. This serpent, of cloth, stuffed, is fairly large, perhaps six feet long, its mouth open showing a red cloth "gueule", and is probably pulled by the child itself as it runs.

The dove, too, a traditional device of the mystery play, is introduced in Plays Nos. 5 and 39. Play No. 5, *La Nativité Nostre Seigneur Jhesu Crist*, is in reality a play to commemorate, not the Nativity of our Lord, but the Purification of the Virgin.¹⁹ In this play the doves are alive. The Virgin requests:

1. 441 Que vous m'alliez deux turtres querre
Ou deux jeunes coulons bonne erre.

There is no problem presented in using living birds, feet tied. But in No. 39 a dove descends, bearing a vial of ointment to be used in the baptism of the newly converted Clovis. This dove was probably one of tin, with a vial fastened in its beak. It could be lowered at the desired moment from the ceiling by a string or wire.

¹⁶ E. Roy: *Etudes sur le Théâtre français au XIV et XV siècle*, p. CXXXVII.

¹⁷ E. Roy: *Etudes sur le Théâtre français au XIV et XV siècle*, p. CXXXVII.

¹⁸ The miniature accompanying No. 24 shows the lions (three in number) sniffing the body of St. Ignatius. The lions' heads resemble more those of devils with wide grinning mouths and unnatural teeth. They seem obviously the heads of imitation animals.

¹⁹ This miracle is the only one of the forty to be based upon the Scriptures. The dialogue of the Virgin and the priest Simeon suggests the words of the New Testament, especially the verses of the *Nunc Dimittis*.

The ship is a device of late introduction into the *Miracles de Notre Dame*. It enters in Play No. 27, which may have been staged sometime between 1370 and 1375, if we accept Magnin's dates of composition. We know that a large ship on wheels had appeared on the stage in a spectacle of the *Conquest of Jerusalem*, by Godefroy de Bouillon, given before Charles VI and Isabel of Bavaria in 1378. This ship moved by aid "de roues qui tournaient par dedens moult soubtillement."²⁰ It would have been natural for the author of plays written about this period to think of the interest with which this larger vessel was greeted, and to have attempted to use the device on a smaller stage, adding to its interest by having real water. On the other hand, it might have been the small skiff in these or other miracles or mystery plays which suggested to the authors of the *Conquest of Jerusalem* and the *Siege of Troy*, the use of a large ship which could move entirely across the stage and the manoeuvres of which would not be limited to a basin of water. The construction of the basin has been discussed above. That the ship was a device of interest to the audience is attested by its frequent use thereafter in Nos. 29, 32, 34, 37 and 40, both secular and religious plays.²¹

The boat is used to create the illusion of a long and perilous voyage. In Nos. 29 and 32 the unhappy woman is abandoned by her executioners in a boat without rudder or sail.

Play No. 29, l. 1656 Qu'en un batel soit en mer mise
Ou en une vielle nacelle,
.....
Et n'ait gouvernail n'aviron,
.....
Ainsi par my la mer s'en vait.

Play No. 32, l. 637 En un batelet la mettrons
Sanz gouvernement de nullui,
Et si n'ara avecques lui
Perches ne voille n'avirons.
Et ainsi aler la lairons
Ou la mer porter la vouldra.

In No. 34 the crippled sons are set adrift on the Seine:

²⁰ E. Roy: *Etudes sur le Théâtre du XIV et XV siècle*, p. CXXXII, note c.

²¹ The boat is pictured in miniature of Play No. 32, but obviously it is not a reproduction of a stage setting. Yet the fact that it is shown, large enough to hold possibly two persons, and drawn to shore by an angel, indicates that such a device was known to have been used.

1. 2322 En Saine une nef prendrons

.....
Aviron ne perches n'aront.

In No. 37 a party consisting of five persons, enter a boat, manned by a master. The existence of the crew was left entirely to the imagination. A slight shove by the master as he enters the vessel sends the ship to the opposite shore and all immediately disembark. The ship in No. 40 seems to be manned by a mariner and to be equipped with sails.

1. 1841 Amis, en ce batel venez;
Je vous meneray volentiers;
Entrez ens, et endementiers
Mon harnois a point mettray
Et mon voile aussi tenderay.
C'est fait; ne vous fault que mouvoir;
Nous avons assez bon vent, voir,
Ce vous puis dire.

.....
Egar! Ce temps se met en pluie
Et le vent s'est tout au contraire.

The wind is most likely imaginary. The rain may or may not have been real. We have records in the mystery plays to the effect that there were "engins" to make rain, snow, hail, and thunder.²²

In Play No. 27, the first in which the ship is used, there is added to the scene a rock in mid-sea. Here the executioners take their victim and abandon her.

1. 1078 A celle rocher la menrons,
Qui est assez avant en mer.

They then return to land in the boat. Then follows a scene in which the Virgin descends to comfort the marooned empress.²³ While the Virgin is withdrawing upwards to heaven, a mariner and a woman pilgrim take the boat and pretend a fearful storm has arisen. Probably there is thunder. They stop the boat, throw out the anchor near the rock.

1. 1332 Mais d'ancrer, se le conseilliez
Soions prez et appareillez
Cy en ce lieu.

²² Gustave Cohen: *La Mise en Scène dans le Théâtre religieux*, p. 155.

²³ The miniature shows the empress asleep on the rock and the Virgin comforting her and laying beside her the healing herbs. The picture is not an exact reproduction of a stage setting but it indicates what was in the mind of the artist as an outstanding scene.

1. 1335 Delez ceste roche, pour Dieu,
Arrestons, sans plus faire nage
Tant que soit passé cest orage,
Et ce mal temps.

Thus the empress is found and rescued.

There remain to note a number of devices which appear once, twice, or three times only. In some cases the same device is used in plays closely following one another and again in widely separated plays. In Nos. 10, 14, 36, we find directions given in the text for the angels to prepare a chair at a designated place on the stage for the Virgin or Dieu to use, in one case for hearing mass, in others for witnessing a trial. In play No. 10, the Virgin orders:

1. 304 Et toi, mon ami Gabriel,
Vous deux en celle église aiez
Et un siège m'appareilliez,
Si honneste que je m'y siesse.

In Play No. 14, the Virgin says:

1. 840 Ho, Seigneurs, en ceste chaire
Vueil cy seoir et reposer.

In No. 36, Dieu gives an order for a place to be prepared for him to sit as judge while attending the trial of Pierre le Changeur.

1. 347 Anges, savez que vous ferez?
Aiez m'un siège la jus mettre
Ou seoir conme juge et maistre.

These chairs are probably ready on the stage, near or in the mansion or place designated. Perhaps the better to "prepare" a chair for the Virgin, the angels throw a white cloth or a silken cover over it.

Baptism occurs in four plays, Nos. 13, 20, 35, and 39. All baptisms seem to be by complete immersion. St. Basile says to Libanius who requests to be baptized (Play No. 13):

1. 1009 Ami, le sains fons sont tout prest;
Despoulliez vous.

.....
Or entrez ci sanz demourée.

After the baptism and benediction, St. Basile says:

1. 1069 Amis, pensez de vous vestir.

In Nos. 13 and 20 the font²⁴ consists probably of a huge kettle or hogs-head of water, made to appear like a low well-curbing. In Nos.

²⁴ Miniature accompanying Play No. 29 shows a large holy water font of stone. Such a font could have been sufficient for baptisms likewise.

35 and 39 the basin which serves as the sea can also serve as font.²⁵

The creation of the illusion of light and darkness is not so easy on a stage which uses daylight for its illumination. We have a record of the manner in which the mystery play of the Old Testament depicted the separation of shadow from light upon the creation of the world. This was accomplished by showing of a cloth painted half white and half black.²⁶ But no such crude device, it seems to me, could be used in Nos. 16 and 31, which mention the falling of night and its shadows. In No. 16, the donkey-driver says:

1. 1344 La nuit est ja noire et espesse.

In No. 31, Berte, abandoned in the forest,²⁷ is frightened by the coming of darkness:

1. 936 Il s'anuite, dont moult m'ennoy;
Ne puis aler en avant, lasse!

The imagination of the audience was probably called upon to realize that darkness had fallen; perhaps some of the torches or candles then burning to help illuminate the scene were put out, thus darkening the stage.

There are other devices which are interesting. To mention briefly a few, one notes: a stone which falls and kills a bishop (the stone being made of cloth stuffed and painted); the sweet odor left by the heavenly procession (being incense); dancing which takes place on the stage in No. 40, and which quite exhausts one gallant old man, to the probable amusement of the audience.

Such are the most important of the devices in the plays. We come now to the feasibility of staging, upon a limited space, a miracle play using such devices as have here been noted.

²⁵ As directed in the text, the candidate for baptism divests himself of all his garments and is baptized by submersion. A nude convert would not in the least embarrass the spectators of the fourteenth century.

²⁶ Gustave Cohen: *La Mise en Scène du Théâtre Religieux*, p. 159.

²⁷ One notes in the miniature the comparatively large, thick trees and the grass of the forest where Berte lies, and whither the Virgin goes to console her.

CHAPTER III.

In the hearts of the audience which assembled in the hall of the guild on a spring day in March¹ almost six hundred years ago, there were probably many of the same feelings and expectations with which we today attend the theater. But there was also a motive not existent today in the presence of the stage. This was the element of religious worship, of reverence and awe before a manifestation of Divine Power. The spirit of worship as well as the desire for entertainment brought the fourteenth century spectator to the play.

Probably on this festival of the Annunciation, all the more important and elaborately celebrated by those who openly avowed their devotion to the Blessed Virgin, the majority of spectators had attended mass in the morning, and, their sins forgiven, had gone out from church in contentment. After a good dinner they were now ready to be entertained as well as to lend their presence to the spirit of worship in which these plays were viewed. Religious reverence did not dominate the attitude of the spectator, for the very themes and nature of these representations seem to indicate that the audience was interested in seeing a human drama and in witnessing the staging of a strange or difficult miracle. No. 37, *La Fille d'un Roy*, contains the elements which would please the members of the guild; it tells a story which appeals to the emotions, and it is written with unusual skill.²

An analysis of Play No. 37 will show us that it is quite possible to represent without difficulty one of the most elaborate of the *Miracles de Notre Dame* on a limited indoor stage, and a review of Play No. 1, *L'Enfant donné au diable*, will show the probable staging of the first miracle, a play by one of the least skilled authors. Keeping in mind the development of the devices used throughout the repertoire, one becomes more and more conscious of the extent to

¹ March 25th, the Feast of the Annunciation.

² There are several plays (Nos. 12, 15, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33 especially) which are as elaborate as, and in some particular detail perhaps more intriguing or appealing than No. 37, but analysis of one of these elaborate plays is deemed sufficient to demonstrate the feasibility of presenting such dramas on our stage.

which any one play grew out of the foregoing plays, and how great an influence the element of imitation exerted in this development.

Very little change would be needed in the stage as shown in Chart E for the representation of Play No. 37. The stage, adapted to this play, appears in Chart G. Looking at the scene, one would see the following setting:

- (1) The castle of the king. It is divided into rooms, one having a couch for the birth scene, and later serving as the room of the daughter. The smaller room belongs to the nurse Anne. The two rooms are open to the spectator; the larger has a curtain.
- (2) The church, or "moustier", is referred to as "la derrière", and this may indicate that the church was slightly behind the other mansions. Probably the different alignment was necessitated by lack of width on the stage to have all mansions show fully.
- (3) The temple at Jerusalem.
- (4) The champ, or open space. Perhaps there are some rocks in the champ, near the forest and near the church, which would serve as seats for those who hear the sermon, or as resting places for those on pilgrimage.
- (5) The forest. Probably real trees were used, especially for the plays which were given in the spring, summer and fall months. Imitation trees and painted cloth leaves may have been used in the winter when it was difficult to secure green foliage.
- (6) Heaven. This mansion is probably most beautifully decorated, and has two staircases, one descending towards the spectators and the other concealed in the rear of the structure.
- (7) The sea and the boat. The boat must be large enough to hold five persons.
- (8) An inn at Constantinople, probably furnished with chairs and possibly a table. From the miniatures one notes that actual chairs were used; also tables with cloths and dishes.
- (9) The emperor's palace at Constantinople. This mansion is open to view of the audience. It has a curtain which may be lowered. A couch is seen within.
- (10) Another part of the champ, possibly set with a few trees or bushes, to represent a meeting place for the pagan kings, and the scene of battle.
- (11) A church at Constantinople.
- (12) A pool. This is probably a large kettle or hogshead set down below the level of the stage, so that the bathers

appear to step down into the water. There would not have to be water in it.

- (13) A small prison with a door. The door has a small opening in it, through which the voice of the prisoner may be heard.

There are needed only nine actual constructions upon the stage, including the sea, and ten if the pool is counted, but it is rather a temporary device than a permanent structure. There are the usual three exits, one that leads directly into the house on the right, a second that comes in under or behind heaven, and a third that is in the rear and hidden by the mansion of the inn. Some plays (e. g., No. 39) record the use of exits in the stage directions. Possibly many plays made similar use of exits during the course of their action but give no textual references.

By following the course of the action of this play No. 37, one learns that it was quite stageable, and although to modern theatergoers the simultaneous stage set seems unnatural and crowded, to the spectator of the fourteenth century it afforded the necessary space for the illusion, or at least for the symbol, of a long trip, of a dense forest, and of a battle between armies.³

The play opens with the actors coming on the stage to take their respective places. It is possible that the minstrels played some short selection, or sounded a trumpet, to attract the attention of the audience to the fact that the play was about to begin.⁴ It may even have been that the customary three knocks were given, which has since become the traditional French method of opening a play.

By analysis of the dialogue of Play No. 37, one sees how the directions for acting are incorporated into the text of the play itself.⁵

³ It is interesting to note here the development of a drama which resembles in its life and color that of the Shakespearian stage. It is genuine drama of the people, — gay, serious, at times poetic, and again brutally realistic. The armies here, for example, are represented by a few men on foot, but there is the same realism of costume, the clash of swords in action, the shouting, that one finds in the combats of Shakespeare's plays. French classic drama has preserved none of these traits.

⁴ The miniature accompanying Play No. 3 shows the minstrels blowing the trumpets at a feast.

⁵ By reference to Chart A one notes the increasing number of plays to which stage directions are added to the manuscript text after Play No. 26. Up to No. 27, in only five plays did directions appear:

Play No. 10 contains 2 instances
Play No. 15 contains 1 instance
Play No. 22 contains 1 instance
Play No. 25 contains 1 instance

The author of No. 37 is one of the most skilled of all who composed for the guild. One who has read through the forty plays, cannot fail to note how dexterously he makes his transitions from "scene" to "scene". There is no abrupt ceasing of action at one place to begin at another, as is the case in some of the earlier plays. This author makes it possible for certain actors to reach with ease the scene of their next speaking appearance, by directing the attention of the audience to a group at another place on the stage. This particular author seems to have a true "feeling" for the theater. He makes use of the pathetic and the miraculous, and he prolongs the suspense in several scenes. He seems to have built his play towards a climax which occurs in the scene in the garden when the white deer appears to Isabel. One might divide the play into five "acts" presenting in succession the following actions:

- Act I—Birth of the daughter Isabel; death of the queen, return of the king.
- Act II—Decision of the king to take his daughter to wife; flight of Isabel under the protection of Anne, Usère, and the angel Gabriel.
- Act III—The victory of Isabel as a marshal in the emperor's army, and the marriage of Isabel to the emperor's daughter.

Play No. 26 contains 1 instance

Total 6 instances

In the last fourteen plays directions appear in all but four plays:

Play No. 27 contains	2 instances
Play No. 28 contains	4 instances
Play No. 29 contains	4 instances
Play No. 32 contains	2 instances
Play No. 33 contains	1 instance
Play No. 34 contains	5 instances
Play No. 36 contains	10 instances
Play No. 38 contains	3 instances
Play No. 39 contains	4 instances
Play No. 40 contains	2 instances

Total 37 instances

This increase corresponds to the growth in dramatic skill and the tendency to greater elaborateness in the last third of this group of forty plays. It shows that the authors were becoming more conscious of the need for effective acting and were endeavoring to aid by suggestion. Yet one notes the total absence of directions in Play No. 37, which follows a play containing ten instances and is, in turn, followed by a play containing three instances of stage directions. This seems to suggest that to such a group of actors as gave the *Miracles* on a practically unaltering stage, there was no especial need for guidance in acting outside of the lines of the text, provided this text, as in No. 37, clearly suggests the appropriate action.

Act IV—The test devised by the emperor to ascertain the sex of his "son-in-law"; the scene in the garden where appears the deer.

Act V—The confession of Isabel to the emperor; the return to her father's house and the double marriages of Isabel to the emperor, and the king to the emperor's daughter.

This play does not build towards a scene in which the Virgin acts to bring about the unravelling of the plot, for this story has sufficient motivation within itself; yet the author has very capably and interestingly introduced the miraculous which he felt was absolutely necessary, inasmuch as it was the excuse for the production of the play.

The action of what we may call Act I takes place in or near the mansions marked (1), (2), and (3), and the part of the champ marked (4), on Chart G. In this portion of the play we have the king and queen, who express their wish for an heir; they attend church and hear a sermon.⁶ After their return home [to mansion (1)] the queen realizes she is soon to give birth to a child; the king leaves with his men on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; he entrusts the care of his queen to a faithful servant, Anne, and a few followers. The queen gives birth, within mansion (1), to a daughter who is carried "*la derrière*", probably behind mansion (1), so that her cries may not disturb the queen. The queen dies, her body is carried to the church and then off-stage by four men under the direction of the sergeant. The king and his men have now reached mansion (3), Jerusalem, and say their prayers. A messenger advises them of the queen's death and they return to mansion (1). The child, now four years old, is brought onto the stage, probably through entrance (a), into mansion (1). The king dismisses his men for a week's rest. This ends the action of Act I. Chart H traces the action of Act I.

At the end of the first division of the action, arbitrarily designated as Act I, the king is left seated at mansion (1) and his men, on

⁶ The sermon here is clearly preached to those assembled on the stage. Out of the forty plays, sixteen have sermons incorporated within the play, as here in No. 37. Twelve have sermons given at the beginning, sometimes by a cleric (or saint as in No. 24) who appears in the action of the play. In these instances the sermon was possibly addressed to the audience only, or else we should find the actors in their first lines making some reference to the sermon. Very often the sermon, when preceding, does not fit in at all as such with the action of the story. Twelve plays have no sermon. The sermon is not to be found more frequent in plays of religious nature than in those of worldly theme. In a few instances the body of the sermon is omitted from the manuscript; the text may be given and the closing words. The preacher probably in some of the plays mounted a sort of pulpit, perhaps a portable affair.

leave, have gone to the rear of the stage. Act II, or the second phase of the story, begins with these men returning almost at once to the king, and advising him, the count acting as spokesman, to marry again. The author in this part has copied textually from Play No. 29, *La Fille du Roy de Hongrie*. The daughter Isabel is found to be the only woman who resembles the dead mother (the king had vowed to marry no one who did not resemble his deceased wife), and the king allows himself to be convinced he should marry her. The daughter, brought before her father, unable to refuse to obey, asks for time; she then flees with two faithful servants, the nurse Anne, and a manservant, Usère. Both women change to men's garments in Anne's room of mansion (1), all in view of the audience.

Isabel, Anne, and Usère, while the king and his followers are seated very possibly at a table before the house, playing chess or drinking, go away into the forest. Supposedly lost, the two women sit down, and Usère walks towards the sea in search of aid. While he is looking for help, Dieu, in heaven, orders Gabriel to go down to earth, live with the wanderers and guide them. Gabriel sheds his white angel-robe and, dressed as mortal man, descends and meets Usère near the sea. Gabriel suggests to the party that they take passage on the ship to Greece. He speaks in Latin⁷ to the master of the vessel, who takes them on board. There are five of them. A small boat could accommodate this number; the master, entering last, gives a shove and the boat drifts to the opposite shore. They pay the master and make their way to an inn at Constantinople. Gabriel commends the travelers to the hostess or inn-keeper. Isabel sits down to rest on a bench in front of the inn. Chart I traces the action of Act II.

Now begins what may be termed Act III. A squire of the emperor of Constantinople, sent to the inn in search of two of the emperor's knights, meets Isabel and her party. He takes them for men and is much impressed by their noble appearance. When a messenger [from off-stage, entrance (b)] comes to advise the emperor of an attack by pagan kings, the emperor sends for Isabel and her companions, to come to his palace. He enlists them in his army, making Isabel a

⁷ Latin is used to convey the impression of a foreign language. The author probably knew no other foreign tongue, and the average bourgeois would not be able to understand these speeches, garbled as they were in pronunciation. In No. 33, the pagans, against whom Robert is fighting, speak an incomprehensible jargon.

marshal. The emperor sends his knights to get their arms; they probably go behind the mansions and return quickly with swords and shields. Isabel and her friends return to the inn and put on armor which was lying there ready. Isabel's party go by the church and pray before presenting themselves to the emperor. The pagan kings, five in number, come onto the stage from behind the mansion of heaven, through entrance (c), and gather on the champ near the place marked (10) on the Chart. There are perhaps eight persons in the emperor's army, against the five pagans. They join battle in the champ. Isabel wounds one pagan; after some hand to hand sword-play, all the enemies surrender. Isabel, as marshal, arranges a triumphal procession back to the palace; the prisoners are chained two by two, and presented to the emperor's daughter. As a reward for success in battle the emperor decides to marry his daughter to the marshal of his armies, who is to all appearances a noble young man. The count and Isabel go to the chapel to await the emperor who arrives later with his daughter. While the wedding party is standing before the chapel and while the ceremony is supposedly taking place, a sergeant runs to entrance (b) and summons the minstrels who play while the bridal procession returns to the champ before the palace. Isabel remains behind at the chapel in prayer, and God sends Michael to tell her to have no fear but to confess who she is and to tell her story to her wife that night.

The emperor orders a monk to hide in the bridal-chamber and to report what he hears. The couple lie down, and Isabel tells the emperor's daughter her story. The daughter agrees to keep the secret. The monk slips out of the room and tells the emperor what he has heard. Unable to believe, yet suspicious, the emperor decides to put Isabel to a test; meanwhile he has the monk locked in prison. Chart J traces the action of Act III.

One notices how the author is increasing the suspense, building towards the moment when the masquerade of Isabel shall be discovered. The device of the emperor to discover the truth occupies the action of what may be called Act IV. The emperor announces his wish that the newly wedded pair go with him into the garden and bathe nude in a pool there, according to a custom of the country. On the way, Isabel prays to the Virgin to save her. God sends Michael to take the form of a white deer and lead the king and his followers

away. Michael promises to do the Lord's bidding and descends a staircase to the rear of heaven. When hidden from the audience, the angel supposedly changes form, for from behind the mansion of heaven the actor disguised as a deer starts forward. The emperor and his followers go in pursuit of the deer.⁸ When all are out of sight behind the mansions, the deer returns and speaks to Isabel, telling her to undress without fear of discovery and then to free the monk from prison. The deer then goes behind the mansion of heaven and Michael in the form of an angel mounts to join God and the Virgin who have thus far throughout the play remained seated aloft.

The climax of interest is reached at this point where one expects the emperor to discover the sex of his "son-in-law", and it is here that the miracle takes place and that the emperor is convinced that Isabel is a man. Immediately upon the conclusion of this scene at the pool, we hear the unhappy monk lamenting his fate in his prison. God has compassion on him, and, with the Virgin and the accompanying angels, descends. The Virgin suggests that they sing a rondel to please the people.⁹ God promises deliverance to the monk, and the procession returns to heaven. The intervention of the Virgin is not necessary to the working out of the plot, but the appearance of the Virgin is necessary for the fulfillment of the traditional purpose of the plays, namely, the praise of the Mother of God. Chart K traces the action of Act. IV.

We come now to the last division of the action, or Act V. During the lament of the monk, and the visit of the Virgin to his prison, the emperor has returned to his palace and Isabel and the daughter have put on their garments again and are hastening to the palace. The emperor sends for the monk and accuses him of falsehood. Isabel then makes a full confession of the truth. The emperor is much im-

⁸ The miniature shows Isabel and Anne (as men) on horseback, meeting the white deer as it comes out of the forest, and listening to its counsel. This is the artist's conception, for in the text there is no mention of the actors being mounted. We know it cannot be the emperor and a knight who appear here on horse, for the emperors consistently appear with crowns and in this case the men should seem to be pursuing the deer.

⁹ The rondel takes the place of the Latin hymns which were sung in the liturgical drama. There were two possibilities in connection with the rondel: it might be recited, or it might be sung. The rondel was sung in the *Miracles de Nostre Dame*, for usually the Virgin before beginning her descent, says to the angels, "Chantez". Then, too, by being sung, the rondel affords sufficient time for the procession to descend with dignity. See Ludwig Muller: *Das rondel in den Französischen Mirakelspielen u. Mysterien des XV u. XVI Jahrhunderts*. Marburg, 1884, in *Ausgaben und Abhandlungen der Romanische Philologie*, v. XXIV.

pressed by the story, as well as the miracle which has been performed, and decides to marry Isabel himself, and give his daughter to Isabel's father. The whole court sets out across the stage to mansion (1) where Isabel's father is seen sitting where he was at the end of Act I. Her father is rejoiced to see her, and agrees to the double wedding. The king says that they will all go "la derrière" and each marry his own bride. The count acts as master of ceremonies and designates the order in which the company shall leave the stage. First the minstrels are summoned again from entrance (b). They head the procession. Most probably the company from heaven descended and closed the line as all go off the stage through the rear exit.¹⁰ Chart L traces the action of Act V.

By having witnessed now, in imagination at least, a play which is among the most elaborate of the group, one has a better understanding of the elements which went into the production of this successful stage play.¹¹ It is clear that in the staging of this play, no serious difficulty was offered either by the nature of the devices, nor by the narrow confines of the stage. It is noticeable how relatively simple the staging of even these elaborate plays becomes when one analyzes the action step by step. This clarity of action, this reduction of the

¹⁰ The final exit of all the company of actors is provided for in practically every play. Sometimes the supposed purpose of leaving is to attend mass; sometimes no destination is given, the company forming in procession and singing some chant of the church, as the *Te Deum*, or the *Regina coeli lactare*, as they leave the stage. The spectators may have joined in the singing of such church canticles.

¹¹ Each play, naturally, will present individual problems in staging. These problems could be most satisfactorily explained only by some such detailed analysis of each play as has been given above for No. 37. The conclusion arrived at, namely, that not one of these forty plays offers any insurmountable obstacle in the matter of acting upon a limited stage such as has been suggested, is based on analyses that I have made as to setting and action of each of these dramas. In making this study of each play, among the various problems that arose is the question of the making of a supposedly long journey within the limited width of the stage. It seems most probable that the actor did not leave the stage, even for an instant, and then reappear at his next destination. The very few times that an actor does leave the stage, or disappear behind the mansions, are revealed by the dialogue or indicated by one of the rare stage directions. The tradition was that all action be in view of the spectators, and the audience of the fourteenth century was accustomed to seeing Rome located within a few steps of Constantinople or of Paris. The monologue (or dialogue) spoken by persons "en route" is continuous and in many instances would seem to have been uttered while the actor was walking from mansion to mansion, and is so worded that by the speech the spectator's attention is called to the fact that certain distances have been covered and new places reached. An actor would not leave the stage in order to reach his goal unseen by other actors. We know that the Virgin and her angels are frequently upon the stage invisible to any but the one who has called upon her, and sometimes even to that person. Yet in reality she probably walked before the very faces of the other actors.

plot to the essentials, is a national trait that has here been forced and guided by the material facts of the stage setting.

One has only to look back now at the action and stage of the first plays of the manuscript, to become at once conscious of the fundamental resemblance between, let us say, the stage of Play No. 1 and of No. 37,—even though thirty years may separate their representation. There is the same stage with its fixed mansions; there is the same general skeleton of plot, with divine intervention at the necessary moment constituting the climax. The difference lies in a more skillful technique and a further elaboration of details of action in the later play. Also, the authors of these later plays seem to write with the stage, the action, and every movement of the actors, in mind. The pointing of a lesson through the dialogue, and the glorification of the Virgin through long prayers, the primary concern of the earlier dramatists, no longer seem the chief thought of the authors. Then, too, because the early writers had not so consciously before their minds the *acting* of the play, they did not incorporate into the text many stage directions, and hence, though the early plays are simpler, it is harder to follow the path of the actors on the stage and to ascertain with the same degree of certainty that at a given moment, during the speaking of specific lines, any one definite action occurs.

By an analysis at this point of the first play of the manuscript, one sees before one a drama which contains the germ of the later plays. The early play may be compared to the motion picture of twenty years ago, imperfect in mechanical construction, in which plot and action were reduced to the barest outline. The resultant picture was jerky, and the linking of scenes was effected by subtitles or by the spectator's imagination. If one continues this comparison, the later, elaborate *Miracles de Nostre Dame* are our current motion pictures; dialogue and action blended, climax foreshadowed, with no need of subtitles to inform us what has taken place. So one expects, in Play No. 1, to find the essentials of drama, but crude in composition, and the stage presentation halting and uneven because of inadequate equipment.

Play No. 1, *L'Enfant donné au diable*, requires seven mansions. The stage is that of Chart C. From right to left stand the following constructions:

- (1) A house of one room, provided with a couch and curtain. Exit (a) opens into this room. The wall towards the audience is entirely open.
- (2) A chapel with altar.
- (3) A hermitage.¹²
- (4) A large mansion representing the pope's palace at Rome. This need be only an arch, with a chair to serve as throne.
- (5) and (6) are small mansions representing hermitages. They are tiny houses with four walls and a roof and a doorway.
- (7) Heaven. This mansion has the traditional decoration; one stairway is in view of the audience.

Exit (b) is behind the large mansion (4) and exit (c) is under heaven. Much of the action takes place in the champ.

The difficulty of being sure of the location of the actor at a given time is shown in the opening scene of Play No. 1. The wife addresses a prayer to the Virgin, and the Virgin answers at once. Was the wife before the altar of the chapel, and did the Virgin descend during the prayer and walk across the stage to be beside the woman when She answered? We assume this to be the case in view of the practically standardized scene of descent and ascent of the Virgin in these forty plays, the details of which we gather from later plays in which each movement on the stage is revealed in the text. Our assumption that the Virgin appeared in person beside the woman is borne out when further on we find these words of the wife:

- 1. 32 De tant que vous vous estes cy
A ma personne demonstrée.

Then the Virgin must have returned to heaven. The woman on her way to mansion (1) meets the husband. They make a vow of chastity. The two devils appear from the rear entrance and remain upon the stage, even when not speaking, retiring into the background and following attentively the fate of their victims. They undoubtedly show great joy when the couple fall into temptation.

While the devils are talking, plotting the temptation, the couple have reached the house and the husband at once announces his intention to break the vow. The wife, in anger, promises to give to the devil the child that shall be conceived. Afterwards, the couple in penitence go to the church. The child is born and the devils present

¹² One miniature shows the hermit at prayer within his house, the fourth wall being open to the audience. The hermitage might have been as pictured, i. e. open to the audience, when some specific action took place within the mansion.

themselves to carry it off. To the mother's plea that she keep it for seven years, the devils agree. The mother then prays the Virgin to protect the child. The Virgin descends with Michael and Gabriel. She gives no direction to sing, but a rondel appears in the text; we know, therefore, that the procession descended singing. She promises that the boy shall grow up safely.

When seven years have passed, the devils come again for the child. They agree to leave him eight years longer, but take a signed contract that the mother will then give him up. Frequently the husband and wife pray, and it is sometimes difficult to determine from what part of the stage the prayer is offered. To conclude briefly, the son, age fifteen, is told of his fate, and goes to the pope to seek baptism. He is sent to three hermits. Between visits to each, as he walks from mansion to mansion, he prays. As he leaves the third hermit, the devils who have been following him, seize him to drag him off. The son cries:

- l. 1220 Puissant Vierge, veuillez m'aidier,
Reine des cieulx souveraine,
Vers ce dyable qui me maine,
Dame, me veuillez garantir.

The Virgin must descend in answer to the cry, for she speaks to the devil:

- l. 1242 Maufé de male dénommée,
Retournez; n'alez en avant.

She is evidently on the champ near the son:

- l. 1262 Ca, mon enfant,
A moy es; trè te près de moy.

She summons the devils and the unfortunate boy before Her Son, who is to be the judge. Dieu probably remained seated in heaven, for there is no indication in the text that He descended. The Virgin, the devils, the boy and the hermits stand before Him on the champ. The devils state their case—the truth; but the Virgin seeks to “get around” the law. Evidently Dieu was turning through the leaves of a law book, for the Virgin asks what decision He finds there:

- l. 1312 Avez vous trouvé en voz livres
Le droit, que vous cy demandez?

When the devils produce the signed and sealed contract (which likely bore an enormous red seal) the Virgin seizes it and tears it up — obviously unjust, but such was the conception of the powers of the Virgin. Decision is rendered against the devils (on the technical

point that the father of the child had not been a party to the vow to give the child to the devils) and the demons withdraw.¹³ Apparently law decisions on technical grounds have divine precedents. The son, the angels, the Virgin, Dieu (who now descends) and the hermits, go to the house of the parents of the son to tell them of the salvation of the young man, and then leave the stage, supposedly to go into the garden. They sing a *Te Deum* as they leave.¹⁴

In this review of the first play in the manuscript, one can not fail to be conscious of crudeness of technique in the composition, most obvious in the lack of transition from scene to scene, and of the lack of creative imagination. Yet one notes in this early representation the skeleton and essential traits out of which grow the later plays. The setting of Play No. 37 is only an elaboration of the stage of No. 1. The dimensions remain the same; four of the mansions are practically unchanged in position and in size. The stories of both plays are directly and logically told. The superiority of the later play over the earlier is due to the realization on the part of the authors of the value of emotional appeals, and to the development of technical skill both in the presentation of a device calculated to arouse the emotions of the spectator and in the blending of the various scenes into an harmonious whole. In the more elaborate play No. 37, the reader is never in doubt as to the location of an actor upon the stage. The general trend of action, the use of exits and entrances, the singing of the rondel to accompany the descent and ascent of the Virgin, and the childbirth scene, are common to both plays; but No. 37 is also the outgrowth of the joint experience of the authors who wrote between 1345 and 1380. It contains devices which had been proven of interest by the evident success of the plays in which they first appeared, e. g., the ship, the forest, the prison, and the use of animals.

This skill in stage-craft was the result of the study which most authors seem to have made of plays preceding their own. Thruout the repertoire, if one studies attentively the text, the plot, the devices, and the emotional appeals of these plays, one finds fair evidence that

¹³ In several plays the devils grumble at the inability of Dieu to do anything that His Mother does not want Him to do. In one place they even venture to say that He is afraid of His Mother.

¹⁴ The miniature shows the devil attempting to drag away the son, whom the Virgin is holding by the arm. The monk is at prayer within his hermitage. The artist's impression is here reproduced and the picture is not that of the trial scene upon the stage.

the staging of each play was based on, or at least took cognizance of, the stage and the manner of presentation of foregoing plays. We find this to be true in the manner of imitation in theme, in text, in rondel, and in mechanical devices. When imitation occurs, there is also to be noticed a tendency to elaborate upon the device or the emotion in question, showing that each new author sought in that manner to render more impressive that which he was adapting from an earlier play.

One can distinguish, reading the plays in the order of the manuscript, certain tendencies, such as the development of typical scenes, and of typical rather than individual characters; the progressive elaboration of devices; a growing taste for realism, which necessitates more rational action and greater skill in scene transition and construction; and a tendency to show the human motive, that is, to introduce the psychology of character. Such imitation and improvement of what has gone before is an important element in the development of the drama as we have it in these *Miracles de Nostre Dame*.

Among the scenes which become "typical", if one considers the whole group of plays, is the child-birth scene. The first three plays to show child-birth upon the stage deal with it very briefly. But No. 15, a play of realism, introduces a scene of great suffering. The author of No. 15 probably had also in mind earlier scenes, for he has the midwife place upon the breast of the woman a book of the life of St. Marguerite.

1. 464 Si Dieu plaist, il nous fera grace
Briément et sainte Marguerite
De qui vezcy la vie escripte;
Mettez sur vous.

These lines echo words found in Play No. 1,

1. 290 Tenez: mettez sur vostre pis
La vie qui cy est escripte:
Elle est de Sainte Marguerite;
Si seres tantost delivrée.

The miniature of Play No. 5 shows the Virgin after the birth of the Christ Child, lying with a book on her lap. Evidently this use of the book of St. Marguerite became traditional. In the plays following No. 15, such as Nos. 29, 32, and 37, the scene of suffering is retained, and reaches its height in No. 37, where the mother dies. The language has become practically identical in such scenes. The increase in in-

tensity in the portrayal of the suffering was consciously done by the author to add to the pathos and emotion of his scene.

The hunt is another episode which becomes standardized but at the same time more elaborate in detail. In No. 4 the hunt takes place on foot, yet in Nos. 30, 31, and 32, where horses and dogs are used, the procedure is the same. The dogs are brought, valets sent on ahead, the horns sounded, the game sighted, and the hunters disappear into the forest. In Nos. 4, 31, and 32, the king is separated from the party, lost, and seeks lodging in the nearest refuge. In No. 30, it is the king's daughter who is lost. More space is devoted in later plays to the details, such as the apportioning of dogs and certain stations in the forest to specific valets. The general discussion before the horns are sounded becomes longer.

In the torture scenes the methods devised become increasingly more cruel. From a simple, though painful to the victim, cutting off of a hand in No. 6, and a beating with clubs in No. 9, one finds the scenes of Nos. 22, 24, 25, 34, and 38 becoming prolonged with torture by fire, sword and lions.

The ship scene could not be enlarged insofar as actual manoeuvres of the boat were concerned; No. 27 introduced the boat; No. 29 added a rock in mid-sea and a storm; No. 40 repeats the storm, increasing its intensity until the boat cannot complete its journey.

One might expect the devil scenes to become "stock scenes" and to go on developing, but this did not occur. The devil scenes in Nos. 1, 3, 6, 9, 13, 14, 16, 18, 25, and 36 are very soberly conducted — a marked contrast with scenes in the mystery plays. There are never more than two demons on the stage, sometimes only one. In Nos. 12 and 30 the demon symbolizes evil and suggests to his victim the wrongdoing. The tendency of these plays to ascribe human motives to actions and to develop realism, not to terrify, nor yet to amuse, by use of the supernatural, is responsible in part for the vanishing of the traditional devil from this miracle stage.

The staging of scenes is repeated with variations. Play No. 36 imitates the trial scene of No. 1, and greatly elaborates thereon. In No. 36, special chairs are placed for Dieu and the Virgin; the case opens formally with all the marks of a parody on the courts of justice of the fourteenth century. A similar case of imitation is the election scene of No. 38 which imitates No. 3. In No. 29 we have a recognition

effected through a ring. We find this idea repeated in No. 32. Although this does not become a stock scene, it was nevertheless a device frequently found in romances and the author of No. 32 very evidently copied it, along with other details, from No. 29.

In the matter of individual roles, we find standardized types developing. Husbands are credulous and quick to suspect the infidelity of their wives. They invariably make pilgrimages at the moment the wife, in child-birth, needs them most. The mother-in-law is inhuman and deceitful; the uncles or brothers are villains ready to betray the women entrusted to their care. The knights and counts, sergeants and other attendants of the kings and emperors, have standardized roles. The saints and martyrs are traditional in their martyrdom and defense of their faith. The wives are always faithful and usually maligned. They protest innocence and call upon the Virgin. The hermits, the popes, the cardinals, the bishops and deacons, have each practically the same characteristics throughout. One cannot help but note how very worldly and sinful the clergy is,—the hermits excepted. The executioners when torturing are cruel, but merciful to women. There are a few characters who stand out as individuals. The messenger in No. 32 who gets drunk and garrulous and is not above bribery, is one. Others out of the ordinary are the charcoal burner in No. 32, and Simon in No. 31. In No. 27, the brother-in-law, who is typical in his sinful intention, is, however, rather an unusual character in that he takes counsel with himself concerning his desire and realizes it is wrong. The author here makes a very evident attempt to portray human motives. It is the first evidence towards a conscious psychological treatment of character.

The repetition of the devices has been noted in Chapter II. It remains here only to call attention to the fact that the dramatist who uses a device which has already appeared, tries to increase its interest by the addition of some further detail. The prisons acquire doors, the hunt is made on horse, the interest in the baptism scene is increased by the descent of a dove bearing a vial of oil, etc.

The growing taste for realism on the part of the spectators led to an attempt on the part of the writers to rationalize the action. Therefore, whereas one finds the structure in early plays to consist of unconnected scenes, in later plays (increasingly so after No. 26) one

finds scenes of transition and a building of plot towards a definite climax.

Examples of textual copying are to be found in several plays, but there seems to be no correlation between textual copying of verse, rondel, or ending, and imitation in plot or device. In some instances nearly the same words appear in the text of different plays, but it is not so much here a matter of imitation as it is the use made by different authors of phrases and vocabulary current at the time.¹⁵

In the matter of imitation of rondel, we find several instances where one play incorporates a rondel previously used; sometimes the lines are copied unchanged and sometimes with slight variation.¹⁶

There are two very clear cases of imitation in theme and text. No. 32 imitates to some extent the theme and details of No. 29, such as the recognition effected through the ring, the exile of the queen who is forced to work for a living, and the birth of monsters. No. 37 imitates other details of No. 29, such as the desire of the king to

¹⁵ For such examples compare:

Play No. 15, l. 1099 and Play No. 22, l. 1584

Play No. 34, l. 497)

Play No. 36, l. 909)

Play No. 38, l. 1288) In each case the lines under discussion treat the

Play No. 40, l. 551) question of almsgiving.

Play No. 29, l. 1729)

Play No. 31, l. 917)

Play No. 35, l. 543) It is possible that actual imitation existed here, yet the

¹⁶ The rondeaux copied unchanged are:

Play No. 22, l. 1721)

Play No. 26, l. 1065)

Play No. 30, l. 1410)

Play No. 16, l. 1617)

Play No. 27, l. 1240)

Play No. 14, l. 826)

Play No. 33, l. 1975)

The rondeaux copied with variations are:

Play No. 13, l. 607)

Play No. 15, l. 1836)

Play No. 29, l. 1782)

Play No. 37, l. 3011)

The scene in which the rondel occurs has become above all others a stock scene. Almost invariably the Virgin asks the angels to descend with Her and to sing; sometimes She adds "for the enjoyment of the people." The scene, being usually at the climax, therefore eagerly awaited by the spectators, most probably developed a rather elaborate processional. Although there are no specific indications in the text, the company may have included angels other than those mentioned; these angels may have aided in singing, carried incense, and added much to the spectacular element. In some of the miniatures more angels appear than the two or three mentioned in the text.

marry his own daughter, and copies many lines of text word for word.¹⁷ It would seem as if the author of No. 32 were aware of how well received had been the new and romantic elements of No. 29, and chose to repeat some of them. The author of No. 37, having in mind that No. 32 had copied No. 29, and that both had been successful plays, wished to use some of the dramatic appeals of No. 29, but avoided the repetition of such as had already been exploited for the second time. Instead he chose to repeat other elements of interest, such as the flight of the daughter and the boat scene. In so doing he copied the text of the certain parts of the scenes that he imitated. He doubtless felt that No. 29 had been given so long before his own play (some seven years possibly) that a use of the literal text of No. 29 would not offend. From No. 29, he then turned to another model.

¹⁷ Compare Play No. 29, ll. 1-107 and No. 37, ll. 976-1079.
Compare Play No. 29, ll. 292-351 and No. 37, ll. 1098-1160.
Compare Play No. 29, l. 1782 and No. 37, l. 3011.

CONCLUSION.

In the study of the development of dramatic art, it is frequently difficult to determine either the specific or the relative influences and material that several sources have contributed to the growth of the drama. To what extent has the stage, i. e., the setting and properties, influenced the evolution of the drama? To what extent are various new qualities that color the drama the offspring of specific scenes that have called forth unusual response on the part of the audience — more or less happy accidents that have called out a mass of imitations and improvements? And to what extent do new qualities owe their appearance and permanence to the presentation on the stage of new emotions and ideas that some one creative author wrote into his play?

It would seem most natural that new elements should grow within a play from some action or scene which proved unusually effective when staged. Many exceptional theatrical effects are evolutions of definite stage beginnings. One such scene is that of the silent embrace in No. 32. This recognition scene is rendered all the more touching by the very simplicity of this silent kiss. Such action is not the result of ideas which spring full-grown from the brain of the author, but it is the development and improvement of situations and actions which have been tried out and found effective on the stage. A really excellent dramatist has within himself the qualifications of both author and good stage manager. A good stage manager can increase the effectiveness of any play.

Therefore, one feels justified in judging the value of this stage (its size, appearance, possibilities and its development during the course of the forty *Miracles de Notre Dame*) in relation to the extent to which it contributed to the growth of this fourteenth century link in the chain of drama.

A study of the stage which was probably used in the *Miracles de Notre Dame*, as presented in the diagrams accompanying this paper, and in the analyses of some of the plays, shows that these plays could have been staged in a hall which was quite within the possibilities of the time. The impression that one first gets from reading these

plays is that the stage would need to be very wide, perhaps fifty to sixty feet, with as many as fifteen or more mansions in some of the dramas. Our study has demonstrated as adequate a stage of forty feet in width, with only nine mansions for the most elaborate stage. The study also substantiates that these plays were written for a single guild. The same spirit animates all the plays; the same form, in both structure of play and versification, characterizes them. Thirteen of them are followed by "serventoys", or verses written by members of the guild in praise of the Virgin.¹ Our evidence indicates further that these plays were given during successive years in the same hall, and used the same stage and stage properties.²

The manuscripts of plays were kept available among the records of the guild for those authors who might wish to review what had gone before. The matter of imitation, one feels, almost conclusively indicates that authors did re-read foregoing plays. It further indicates that the order of the manuscript must be more or less the order in which the plays were written and staged; and following close upon this conclusion, is the deduction that plays were given approximately once and sometimes possibly twice a year. Imitation would be im-

¹ Thirteen of the forty plays are followed by these "serventoys". Nos. 1, 3, 15, are followed by one each. Nos. 14, 18, 19, 21, 24, 31, are followed by two each. Nos. 5, 20, 25, 30, are followed by two each, one being honored with the designation "estrivé" and the other by the word "couronné". Many end with an Envoi to the princes of the puy, or "du dit puy", indicating that the writers were among the contestants for honors in the writing of verses in praise of the Virgin. These serventoys deserve more careful study than they have received. It sometimes seems that they could not have been written by the author of the plays which they follow in the manuscript, because of the different spirit manifest in the verse. There is great affectation in the language, which frequently resembles the courtly lyric poetry of Provence. The Serventoy becomes a poem of "lady-service" and is extravagant in metaphor; great emphasis is placed on love, the love of God for man, of God for the Virgin, and of the Virgin for man. The chief themes of these serventoys are the Virgin Birth, the Immaculate Conception, and Divine Love made manifest through the Virgin who is God's instrument. Among the most beautiful and at the same time the most extravagant in use of metaphor are the serventoys following plays Nos. 14 and 18. In the poems following No. 18 the Virgin is represented as a Holy City, and a Temple into which the King of Heaven entered. She should be honored, for in truth it is She who remits our sins. The serventoy following No. 21, which is a rather mediocre play, is one of the most elaborate. The Virgin here is compared to a Ship of the Trinity, a marvelous ship, the body of peace, yards of concordance, etc., into which entered the Admiral of true Deity. The Serventoy of No. 31 represents Christ as a Holy Tree grown by the Spirit in a Glorious Garden. The metaphors remind one of the *Roman de la Rose*. The fact that the serventoys almost unanimously honor the Annunciation strengthens the assumption that the guild gave its plays on that day of Our Lady.

² It is possible that during the course of its existence the guild rented or moved to a larger hall than the first one used. This might allow for greater elaboration in plays after No. 26.

possible within a shorter space of time; and the physical labor involved in preparing for the production of a play would require the lapse of six to ten months between plays.

One very interesting thing which is suggested by a close study of these plays is the nature of the audience which saw them; that is, the tastes and probable reactions of the spectators show the class of society to which they belonged. It seems as if the authors wrote neither for an élite group, nor yet for the common people. The guild for which these plays were written was probably a society of limited membership, composed of craftsmen. It was not before royalty or nobility that the plays were given, for very little is made of pomp and ceremony; the kings are simple, fond of the pastimes of the average citizen; they go rabbit hunting on foot, with a few companions; their emotions, hopes, joys, fears, are those of ordinary people. They do not sit in judgment on their subjects, nor seek to hold them in subjection. The clergy, too, have all the characteristics of the average man. The pope is not above bribery and bargains like any good merchant. We can also be fairly sure that these miracle plays were not given before the populace. In the first place, the kind of action portrayed indicates an audience capable of understanding and of appreciating motives behind conduct. The comic element, the farcical and crude, so dear to the common people, has not developed during the course of the forty plays. This is especially noticeable in the disappearance of the devil scenes, which in the mystery plays grew to such exaggerated proportions that the details of the tricks and the buffoonery became the chief source of interest, and obscured entirely the serious theme and purpose of the play. If the common people had been as heavily represented among the spectators of the *Miracles de Notre Dame*, as they were in the audiences witnessing the mystery plays, the demand would have been for more of the ludicrous and boisterous. There would have been greater interest in, and consequent development of, the spectacular, i. e., of pageantry, as well as of the comic.

The nature of the audience is further shown in the evident taste for realism. Reproduction of scenes from real life becomes more frequent during the course of the plays. We see also an evident liking for the romantic, which verges on the melodramatic. Elements of pathos, of tragedy, and incidents to excite the astonishment of the

spectator, are introduced, all indicating an audience capable of emotional response. The increasing effectiveness with which the plots are developed and the incidents interwoven, indicates an audience that demanded a rational story.

There is traceable in this group of plays the influence which the stage and the action upon the stage had on the development of certain qualities in the drama. That is, the necessarily limited space for acting brought about the introduction of new devices, primarily for the purpose of making the scene more realistic. Thereafter, these devices, or unusual scenes, such as those of childbirth, hunting, torture, the ship, fire, and animals, were copied in many of the succeeding plays, each new author seeking to increase the emotional appeal of such scene. So we find the staging (including under the term the material stage setting) responsible in a high degree for the introduction and development in the plays of certain emotional qualities.

Pathos is introduced probably for the first time in the childbirth scene. We have noted how this scene was developed until the appeal to the sympathy and pity of the spectator reached its highest point. The torture and the martyrdom suffered by the saints, becoming ever more prolonged and cruel, contributed to the intensifying of the tragic qualities,—the heightening of the appeal to pity and terror. The unjust banishment of the queen-wives, and their condemnation, also became scenes strong in pathetic appeal. The recognition by the husband of the long-lost wife, the silent kiss, all these realistic touches, contributed to the development of pathos.

The picturesque and romantic qualities developed apace when the ship and forest scenes were once introduced. The simple scene of sea and ship became more realistic, more picturesquely interesting by the addition of wind and wave. The forest became the scene of a romantic meeting place as well as the background of the hunt. The hunt was a device which by its naturalness and the ease with which it could be executed in realistic detail, contributed much to picturesqueness of the scene. Battles and fire added their share to the romantic qualities which became almost melodramatic.

The element of curiosity and wonder was stimulated by the introduction of animals, both real and artificial. The dogs and horses in the hunting scenes, the doves, and the artificial deer and serpent, are devices introduced in the interests of realism. Also the means

of torture aroused the curiosity of the spectator, and the author, desiring to keep the interest of his audience, and to mystify, developed more and more ingenious methods.

In turn, the demand of the audience that every human (and supernatural) action be shown upon the stage, had great influence upon the required — and thence the traditional — stage setting. "Thrills, horrors, indecency, the commonplace, the comic, all are intermingled with the great theme of life, its meaning, its struggles, its temptations, and the Judgment of God. The soul of a people is revealed in the way it constructs its plays."³ This demand for all life to be realistically represented, led to the development in the miracle play of a drama which is the form of medieval drama resembling most closely the modern play. This collection, recording thirty or forty years of purely native dramatic development in France, before what was most likely an average audience of middle class character, offers important evidence on French dramatic taste and genius. It would indicate, certainly, that French classic drama, in its decorum, in its omission of the romantic and realistic, and of violent action, did not entirely represent average French taste, before it was affected by the Renaissance and super-refined by the influence of the Court and the conception of the "honnête homme." However much this fourteenth century drama may point to the rationalism and order of the classic drama, it is far from its decorum, and the realism of these fourteenth century miracles is frank and without mask.

One notes throughout the course of the *Miracles de Notre Dame* a steady rapid growth in dramatic technique. The limitations imposed by the size of the stage and the properties available, led to concentration of plot, and to a tendency towards symmetry. The playwrights learned how to handle their material in order to construct a dramatic plot. For example, the author of No. 26, *La Femme que Notre Dame garda d'estre arse*, has taken a story from Gautier de Coincy, the plot of which in narrative form covered several weeks. The drama compresses the action into a few hours. Striking, indeed, is the ability that is shown in presenting the most varied themes, romantic, realistic, religious, etc., in a relatively narrow space and with comparatively few mansions or stage constructions. Then, too, the plays more and more build towards and emphasize the essential

³ D. C. Stuart: *The Development of Dramatic Art*, p. 163.

scene. Whereas in the mystery play details of unimportance were stressed for the amusement of the audience, in the miracle play it is the main plot, and further, it is the dramatic moments of this single theme which are stressed. The dramatists become skillful in the arrangement of scenes; in the transition from scene to scene; in the use of contrast and of suspense. Their treatment of the scene wherein the Virgin intervenes is cleverly made to fit into the "dénouement." Instead of being merely a catastrophic goddess to bring about the desired ending, the entrance of the Virgin is the *coup de théâtre*, the great dramatic climax.⁴ The appeal to the eye becomes greater, in the increase in action, and in the spectacular and the picturesque. Through imitation and through building on what has become traditional in foregoing plays, authors improve on their text, rendering it more elaborate and more specific in the matter of stage directions contained in the lines of dialogue. They write with an increasing awareness of the actors and the staging of the play. The progress in this respect is quite remarkable and a striking proof of the fact that dramatic art develops mainly through the actual performance of plays on the stage. It is most revealing to find that the very first plays, despite their brevity, simplicity of action, and relatively few requirements in stage settings and constructions, are by far the most difficult to stage with entire certainty. We are often in doubt just where the actor is who is speaking, or where he goes afterward. Obviously the author was as equally uncertain and vague. On the other hand, when we come to the later and more elaborate plays, we realize that the author is regularly visualizing the positions and movements of the actors and frequently indicates them in his text.

Especially throughout these plays does rationalism come forward strongly. One is impressed with the extent to which realism is based on good sense and on rationalism. Although more elaborate, the action becomes more reasonable. Many plays do not require the intervention of Heaven to solve the problem, for the action has been developed and explained by human motives. This scene, although not realistic, is retained because of its traditional character. The essentially pious or religious elements are restricted rather than developed. Paradise is not changed; its inhabitants become of less importance. Hell and the devils tend to disappear entirely. Genuine

⁴ D. C. Stuart: *The Development of Dramatic Art*, p. 173.

advance is made in the portrayal of natural and human factors. The tendency is to seek the human motive and to explain human psychology.

The authors seem to feel throughout that one must not offend good sense. For example, in Play No. 15, *L'Enfant que Notre Dame resucita*, the very naturalness of the scene in which the child is drowned, because the mother is overcome with faintness after childbirth, and lets its head slip under the water of the bath, is a witness to the rationalization of the scene. Also, the manner in which one becomes aware of the miracle which has been performed, shows the absolute realism of the whole play. Just as the mother is to be burned, the dead child begins to cry. There could be no more simple, natural, or sensible way of showing the restoration of the child to life. The rationalization of plot and the simplicity of stage constructions alike, are done in the interests of producing a play which shall be as natural as possible. From these traits of singleness of theme, clarity and rationalism, one might prophesy these outstanding qualities of French classic drama. One sees prophecy of that extreme simplicity and logic which resulted in the unity of place.

We have noted that a stage adequate for the representation of the *Miracles de Notre Dame par personnages* did not present great difficulties. It was one not at all impossible of construction in a century which witnessed the staging of the complicated mystery play. These miracle plays themselves contain nothing which could not have been effectively presented within the confines of the stage illustrated by the accompanying charts.

Perhaps the impression which strikes one most consistently throughout a reading of the text of the plays, is the continuity of stage development; that is, the steady growth of the setting from play to play. One notes the use of certain devices over and over again; the repetition of similar scenes; and the progressive elaboration of these devices and scenes which later authors adapted from preceding ones. And it is also worth noting that the sequence of plays in which there is most obvious imitation in plot and in stage features, and often even in text, includes some of the best plays of the collection. Certainly, there seems to have been much profit in dramatic effectiveness through such imitation.

Drama has to develop by imitation and by exploitation of what goes before. In the *Miracles de Notre Dame* we have a collection

of plays which throws much light on the growth of French drama, and which is one of the most precious documents of its period. We have before us, upon an actual stage, evidence of the very essential part which a stage setting plays in the evolution of drama. We see the trend which drama takes when produced upon a definite limited stage, and the role which imitation plays in the development of technique of writing.

In this group of plays drama made a definite advance,—an advance characteristic, as we have seen, of French genius. But we do not see this progressive trend maintained in French drama, outside of this group, and a few closely related plays⁵ of the fourteenth century, and so it seems that the *Miracles de Nostre Dame par personnages* were known only to a very restricted group. If they had been more widely known, they would have made a more valuable contribution to the field of French drama.

⁵ *Une Jeune fille laquelle se voulut habandonner a péché. Le chevalier qui donna sa femme au diable. Griseldis.*

APPENDIX I.

The authors of the *Miracles de Nostre Dame* of the Ms. Cangé are unknown, and unknown also are the scribe who copied and the artist who illuminated the manuscript that we so greatly value today.¹ The writing

¹ The royal family at the time of Charles V and for some fifty years following his death were prominent patrons of art and letters. The copyists and translators employed by Charles V were many; but it has been possible to assemble only scanty information on the illuminators who so beautifully illustrated his books. On the other hand, the names of the men who illuminated the books of the Duc de Berry, brother of Charles V, are known to be among the names of the greatest artists of his time.

Another brother of Charles V, Philippe le Hardi, Duc de Bourgogne, established a small library which became the nucleus of the present library of Brussels, and which is sometimes referred to as the "Bibliothèque de Bourgogne." Among the books offered to Philippe le Hardi, in 1403, by a Jacques Raponde, was an illuminated translation of *Boccaccio*. The translation and illumination of this manuscript, *Livre des femmes nobles*, was completed in 1401, under the reign of Charles VI, and offered to Philippe le Hardi in 1403. Its 109 miniatures may be classed among the best executed in France since the beginning of the fifteenth century. This manuscript was found in the library of the Duc de Berry. Under the number "Français 190" it is now at the Bibliothèque de Genève. The only two pages from this manuscript of *Boccaccio* to which I have access at present are illustrated in Planche LIII of *Enluminures des Manuscrits du Moyen Age*, by Camille Couderc. The resemblance of the illuminations in the borders, as well as the work of the miniatures, to the illuminations of the Ms. Cangé is very striking.

The miniatures themselves are of the same size, approximately 3 to 3 1/2 inches square. The border or frame to the picture is identical with many of the borders of the miniatures of the Ms. Cangé. The illuminated border to the page is of the same design, i. e., an upright line to the left of the picture from which branch off the ivy sprays. This upright is entirely separate from the picture as it is in the illustrations of the miracle plays. In the case of the Cangé Ms., the ivy sprays branch, for the most part, in identically the same manner at the top of this upright as they do in the *Boccaccio* Ms. First the ivy spray bears small leaves, ending in larger, elaborate leaves. In both manuscripts, to the right of the pictures themselves, small sprays of two or three leaves and tendrils, branch directly from the frame of the picture.

The one illuminated initial letter to be found in the Ms. Cangé (Play No. 11) has the same scheme of composition, making use of the ivy pattern, and blending into the upright border motif. The conventionalized background of one of the two illustrations of the *Boccaccio* Ms. is of the same design as appears several times (e. g., Play No. 36) in the miniatures of the Ms. Cangé. The perspective and the details of furniture are very similar. The face of Minerva in the *Boccaccio* is the same as that of the Virgin in several of the later miniatures of the *Miracles*.

It is impossible, without much further research, to attempt any suggestion as to the identity of the artist. However, there are a few additional interesting details to note in connection with this ivy motif. The ivy pattern of the Ms. Cangé resembles that which decorates a Psalter of late fourteenth century workmanship. This Psalter was illuminated by one André Beauneveu, for the Duc de Berry. The same conventionalized design forms a frame to the miniatures of the *Miracles* as is found in the miniatures of St. Matthew of this Psalter (Planche XLIX, *Les Enluminures*, etc.) Another ivy illumination which resembles that of the Ms. Cangé is in a Ms. called the *Thérence des Ducs*, a Latin play, which was owned by the son of Charles VI and at the son's death passed to the collection of the Duc de Berry. Yet only the *Boccaccio* Ms. is identical in its resemblance in border illumination and miniature to the Ms. Cangé.

is a fair specimen of its period, but the miniatures are unusually well executed. They are done with a clearness of conception of the theme to be shown, a sureness of line, and a wealth of detail which add both to their interest and to their value.

It is surprising to see the very exact knowledge which the artist evinces of the action of the plays. He must have read them with exceeding care and grasped clearly the dramatic moments. If the manuscript is indeed of around 1405, as it has been dated by scholars, then it is possible that he had seen some of the plays and that would explain in some cases the accuracy with which he has chosen the scene of greatest interest and the astonishing degree to which the action in his miniatures lends itself to staging.

Of the forty miniatures the scenes of thirty could be put on the stage exactly as portrayed, and these pictures are detail by detail a reproduction of the scene as described by the text. Ten miniatures only show some detail which could not have been staged as portrayed in the picture. In each of these cases the problem arises in connection with the supernatural, with the portrayal of devils, angels, or the heavenly company. The artist may well have felt that he could render more impressive the scenes in which these characters appear by endowing them with supernatural powers. So in Nos. 1, 3, 25 we find the devils pictured as flying through the air to seize and make way with their victims. True, in No. 1, we also have one devil very naturally standing on the earth, with his huge, hairy arm about the unfortunate boy. Again, in the scene showing hell in No. 14, the devils are human figures, although adorned with the traditional horns, claws, and tail, and the action shown in this miniature could well have been a reproduction of a stage setting.

In Nos. 13, 30, and 36, the artist has shown his conception of a

It is interesting to note that these various manuscripts which indicate workmanship of possibly the same artist, were all manuscripts at one time in the possession of the royal family,—either the Duc de Berry, brother of Charles V, the Duc de Bourgogne (Philippe le Hardi), another brother of Charles V, or in the libraries of the sovereign himself, and his son. The dates of these manuscripts range from the late fourteenth century to 1415 or 1420.

The names of some of the illuminators of the manuscripts copied for the royal family are known. But no one name can be singled out with certainty as that of the artist who possibly illustrated the Ms. Cangé. It does seem plausible, however, to suggest that this manuscript once formed part of the library of the King, whether the property of the Duc de Berry, the Duc de Bourgogne, or Charles VI. The library of Charles V and Charles VI included prose and verse translations of the *Miracles de Notre Dame*, and it is possible that a copy of the plays was also made for the royal family.

"vision" of the Virgin and her holy company. This vision is not pictured as a stage heaven, for there is no structure supporting the persons; the Virgin appears in elevated position, against the background, surrounded by angel faces and unsubstantial clouds.

In Nos. 16, 24, 32, and 38, the unreality of the picture consists in the angels who are shown as descending or ascending through the air. It is true that in mystery plays angels were made to fly through the air, suspended on wires. But we know from the directions contained in the text of every play of the *Miracles de Notre Dame* and from the time needed for singing of the rondel or for other action, that the angels most certainly made use of the stairway. Miniature of No. 16 shows the angels descending with a covering for the body of the mother of the pope who has died in the forest. In the text, the angels are instructed by the Virgin to build a chapel over the body and this they did, giving it a "firm foundation." The miniature of No. 24 is very interesting, for it shows the soul of St. Ignatius being carried upwards by two angels. The angels, according to the text, after the death of the saint, escorted the soul to heaven. In No. 32, we see an angel guiding to land the ship in which the queen has been abandoned. This angel is pictured as flying, but, of course, upon the stage the angel walked along the edge of the sea and pulled the boat to land. The angel in No. 38 is shown flying down from heaven to wipe the wounds of St. Lawrence who is being tortured. Again, in reality upon the stage, the angel would walk. The artist, then, has portrayed sometimes supernatural figures with the powers that imagination has ordinarily given to them, in preference to action that could be staged, but otherwise his scenes could all be readily represented.

After noting these instances of pictorial action which could not be transposed to the stage, it is interesting to examine a few miniatures in which one can well believe one is looking at a stage and at a definite scene during the performance of a drama. In the miniature of No. 2 we see the hermit sitting in his doorway; he is old, with white hair and beard, and holds a cane in his hand. His house is small; close to it are some small trees silhouetted against a tapestry background of unusual beauty in design. The Virgin accompanied by her two angels is carrying to the hermit the child of the abbess. In the miniature of No. 8 we have a structure representing a church, the

fourth wall being open to the spectator. The avaricious pope, having sold the oil, which should have kept burning the light before the altar, has been unfrocked and is being ejected from the church. The Virgin accompanies the action of the angels with words that one would not expect from the mouth of one so holy, except that some words have changed meanings since the fourteenth century, and, furthermore, in those freer days, the speech of ladies was also freer.

1. 679 Vil charoingne ou il n'a qu'order

.....
 Fuy de cy, fay que despechié
 Soit ce lieu qui est ma maison
 De toy tost sanz arrestoison,

.....
 Et pour ce te commans qu'en l'eure
 T'en voises de cy, sanz plus estre.

One feels that the artist, when he painted this miniature, enjoyed the criticism of the clergy here permitted him.

In the miniature of No. 12 we have a scene of great activity and one difficult to stage, but not impossible, on the narrow confines of that theater. One sees the small cart drawn by a horse, one notes the spikes in the wheels to be found on genuine carts of that period; within the cart is the condemned Marquise de la Gaudine; there is shown the knight who appears mounted and armed for the combat. Behind the cart, towards the rear of the stage, appears the Marquis on horse (this not specified in the text) who is evidently discussing the matter of the combat with the uncle. The text does indicate that the knight arrived on horse, but the fight was on foot.

In the miniature of No. 26 one sees another scene which is interesting from the point of staging. The woman who is supposedly being burned, is partly, but far less than one could expect, hidden by the smoke and flame. The angels at the order of the Virgin are pulling back the burning brands. The nature of the instrument in their hands is not clearly shown but one may suppose they picked up and used some such pronged fork or poker as is illustrated in miniature of No. 4, where the executioner is building the fire and has laid down the fork on the ground. By the fact that the angel and Virgin stand unseen between the people upon the stage witnessing the burning, and the stake, the stage spectators do not see how the fire comes to be scattered and to die down. This is entirely in accord with the textual account.

The miniature of No. 33 shows the moment when Robert Le Diable, still playing the part of the fool, fences with the emperor with a straw which he has picked up from the ground. At this moment also occurred the miracle of restoration of speech to the emperor's daughter who here appears beside the hermit. The emperor and pope are witnesses to this miracle. The dog who became Robert's companion is not forgotten by the artist. The whole scene is a reproduction of what might have been the staging as indicated by the text.

When one studies the details of the miniatures one notes more and more the possibility of influence of stage setting upon the illuminations. Yet it does not seem that the later miniatures are to any greater extent the reproduction of a stage than the earlier ones. The artist, painting in 1405, might have witnessed twenty years before, the last performances of the guild. Yet since the miniatures of the first plays also bear the marks of stage influence, one may reasonably conclude that the more probable fact is that the artist familiarized himself with the plays in manuscript form, and, having in mind the stage of his own day, reproduced what he conceived to have been an actual scene in life, — or on the stage.

Among the details of the miniatures which suggest stage influence, one notes first the picture of a house with the fourth wall open, so that one may see what occurs within. The houses do not seem permanent structures built solidly upon the ground, but rather they resemble movable frames, set upon a floor. They have no width, beyond the necessary door-frame to the doorway. No grass grows in the crack where the houses join the floor; no vines grow over the houses. These mansions resemble one another very closely; the hermitages are small, of the same material and design; the chapels are also of identical architecture; they have narrow leaded windows and are surmounted by a spire.

The backgrounds in the paintings make no attempt at realism, that is, there is no perspective. The designs of the background suggest a wall covered with a hanging of figured material. This background, however, was typical of French miniature painting of the period.

The manner in which the fire is laid around the stage in the execution scene of No. 4 suggests that such was the way in which the fire was built upon the stage. Instead of massing the brush and wood

close to the stake so that the victim stands upon the pyre (as was the reality) the executioner is shown laying the sticks in a circle at such distance from the stake that the smoke would hide but the flame not harm the victim.

All furniture depicted is very simple and easy to move. The chairs are plain and substantial. Apparently the same one is reproduced in Nos. 22 and 23. No. 24 shows a more elaborate seat, with carved arms and feet. The well curbing of No. 30 is very artificial and is not blended into the ground but rests upon the floor as if it were a huge basket covered and painted to resemble stone work. The trees are more natural in appearance than one would expect in a small painting and the grouping in the forest scenes suggests that the model of the artist may have been real trees upon a stage.

The Virgin and Her accompanying angels are shown entering from the spectator's or reader's left seventeen times, and six times the group is shown to the right of the picture. The devils (when not flying in the air) appear on the right-hand side of the miniatures, where is located also the hell scene. This very probably reflects the influence of the religious theater and the traditional location of heaven and hell.

In the scenes of banqueting the tables appear to be set up "in the open", that is, not within any mansion, and, because of their size, it is most likely that such was the case upon the stage. The furniture one may consider as that used in the fourteenth century. The beds are of two kinds: a sort of couch with bolster pillow as in No. 18, and a wooden bed with high headboard but with no footboard, as in No. 20. The cradle in No. 39 is very interesting, and doubtless one resembling it was rocked by Queen Clothilde during the representation of the *Miracle de Clovis*.

The water scenes of Nos. 27 and 32, do not indicate that the artist was attempting any reproduction of a stage sea and ship, for in the miniatures the sea fills the whole picture. But from the accuracy of detail in the miniature of No. 27 in which one sees the abandoned queen asleep upon a rock in mid-sea, and the Virgin appearing to her and leaving beside her the healing herbs, one is led to conclude that whether from reading the manuscript or from seeing a stage production, the artist visualized accurately that which the text

described. The ship shown in miniature of No. 32 has quite the appearance of a "stage device" afloat on a basin of water.

There are a few instances in which the painter did not adhere accurately to the action as indirectly revealed in the text. In Play No. 11, the good merchant does not see the Virgin when She gives him the chapelet, for he is asleep during Her visit. The miniature shows him kneeling before Her and receiving the gift from Her hand. In No. 12 the executioner is riding the horse which pulls the cart, while in the text he is directed to lead the horse:

1. 1152 Le bourrel tout a pié ira
Devant, la charette menant.

In No. 18 the angels are directed by the Virgin to construct a chapel over the body of the mother of the pope who died as a pilgrim. The miniature shows them descending with a draped covering. In miniature of Play No. 5, the nativity scene is not shown as within a mansion or stable, whereas in the text the Virgin enters a building.

1. 74 Vezcy le lieu que je disois,
Entrez en,

The miniatures never portray "Dieu", that is, Christ, as a grown man. Many times throughout the forty plays "Dieu" speaks to the Virgin to give orders, or to answer her questions and suggestions regarding intervention in earthly affairs. In two plays, Nos. 1 and 36, Christ descends to earth to act as judge in a case pleaded between the Virgin and the devils. In the miniature of No. 39 the hand of God appears in blessing, and in No. 40 God appears in a cloud in the upper left-hand corner of the painting. God here is God the Father, rather than God the Son.

It seems very probable that the forty miniatures are the work of one artist. In the first place the same intelligent choice of outstanding scene continues throughout; also the same accuracy of detail. In the painting of the faces the artist has developed certain types, yet he has retained a lifelikeness and an individuality in each that is astonishing. In the following instances very definite emotions are portrayed in the faces: St. Jehan Chrysothome in No. 6 expresses the pain and anguish caused by his severed hand. In No. 11 greed and interest appear on the spying robber's face. In No. 8 impudence worthy of a devil is shown in the expression of the Christ Child at the expulsion of the pope. Pain shows in the face of the cleric undergoing torture in hell.

Yet although various emotions are shown on faces, there are definite types developed for specific characters. For the most part, the faces of mortals are more expressive than those of the heavenly company. The Virgin and Child appear together ten times. The Virgin appears without the Child eleven times. The Christ Child has the cruciform nimbus in every instance; the Virgin and saints have the plain halo. The Child is sometimes naked, as in No. 39, and sometimes clothed as in No. 35. In No. 30, He is in swaddling clothes. The Virgin is portrayed with a crown, without a crown, and with a drapery over Her head. In several instances it would seem that the artist used the same face as model, and then changed to another model. This resemblance is especially noticeable in Nos. 35, 36, and 39; also in Nos. 8 and 13. A Virgin of totally different type in face and dress appears in Nos. 1, 2, 23, 27, and 40.

The saints wear the conventional dress. St. Prist in No. 14 is pictured as a bishop with miter and crosier and halo. St. Agnes is accompanied by a lamb. The angels, conventionally robed, always with wings, are slightly smaller than the Virgin. Their faces are those of young boys, — perhaps among them were some of the young choir boys with soprano voices to aid in the singing of the rondel. No. 13 shows an unusually fat angel. The devils are conventional: sharp teeth, huge ears, claws, horns, tail short like a goat's, and wings resembling those of bats. They wear a hairy covering. In No. 14, two are hideous brutish creatures, but the third is indeed a "bon petit diable" with all the impish charm of Puck.

The good hermits are bearded, white-haired and kindly of countenance. They wear monk's dress and cowl. The popes and bishops express age and dignity in their faces. The popes, even when unfrocked, wear the tiara, and the bishops the miter. The emperor likewise wears a distinctive crown, even when asleep as in No. 20. The kings and queens wear crowns; the queens and princesses when abandoned at sea as in No. 27, or thrown in a well as in No. 30, never lose their symbol of royalty, but they do not wear the crown when in disguise as in Nos. 28 and 37.

One of the most pronounced types developed, and one which reflects character, is that of the executioner. These men appear in Nos. 4, 12, 15, 22, 25, 34, and 38. The facial resemblance of those in Nos. 22, 25, 34, and 38 is striking.

In a study of the costumes one notes evidences of contemporary dress, as, for example, the bailiff, the nun, the queenly robe of ermine, the hair net, etc. The minstrels appear once in No. 3, and thus we see one kind of trumpet they used. The "fool" is shown in No. 17 wearing the traditional cap. The better to play the part of mad man, he has put his dress on backwards. There is no attempt at historic accuracy in the matter of costumes; only of symbolic features of dress such as the vestments of the heavenly company and of the clergy and the use of distinctive crowns to differentiate kings and emperors. Very little can be said on the subject of costumes for the text of the plays is almost entirely lacking in descriptions of dress. In a few instances the elegance of some person's apparel is mentioned, or the beauty of the Virgin and Her robes is set forth in some of the plays which are most intense in Virgin worship.

The artist has designed some very interesting conventionalized patterns for the backgrounds of his pictures. He has repeated the same design from time to time. Entirely new designs appear in Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 14, 22, 23, 24, 25, 33, 34. The other miniatures repeat some former pattern.

So, while one cannot assume that these miniatures are reproductions of scenes from the actual stage settings of the *Miracles de Nostre Dame par personnages*, any more than one would assert that the sculpture over a cathedral doorway is the picture of a mystery play's Last Judgment, as seen by an artist, yet one is impressed with the ease with which the action of these forty miniatures lends itself to staging. This lifelikeness in the pictures is due in the first place to the dramatic skill of the author of the play who saw clearly the limitations of his stage, and simplified the action and cut it to the bare essentials. In the second place, the reality of these miniatures lies in the accuracy with which the artist grasped this simplified action and pictured one outstanding scene therefrom. The work of the more skillful writers among the authors, and the work of the artist, show that sense of balance and proportion characteristic of the French.

This brief study of these miniatures seems to confirm some of the more important assumptions made in our treatment of the staging of the miracles. In the first place, the miniatures support the claim that the plays were given on a restricted indoor stage. The narrowness of all the mansions and the restricted proportions of all scenes

would point to this conclusion. While we have no certain evidence that the artist had seen any of these plays, this conception of the scenes by one who was at least a near contemporary, and who knew where the plays were given, is quite important.

Furthermore, in addition to numerous small details that are confirmed, it is worth noting that the miniatures, in general, in their picturing of stage constructions, groupings, and manner of acting, agree with the ideas that had already been arrived at through a study of the text. The present thesis and the various drawings of probable stage settings, had already been practically completed before the photographs of the miniatures were received. Therefore a comparison of these photographs with the drawings made from consultation of the text will demonstrate this similarity. It might be added that this general agreement also supports the idea that these miniatures were made from a careful study of the plays, to fit specifically the conditions in these plays, and with a minimum concession only to tradition and to imagination.

APPENDIX II.

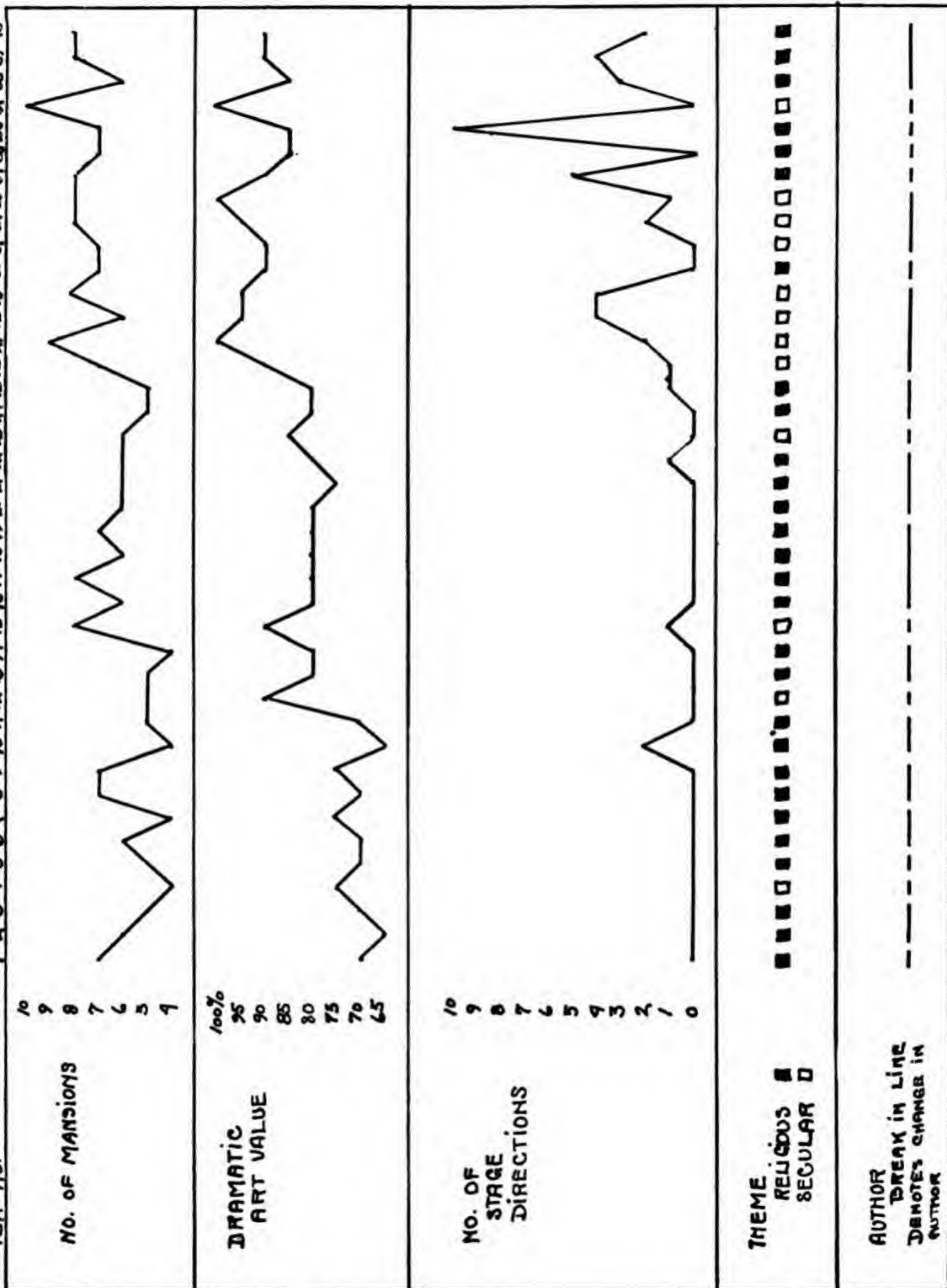


CHART B

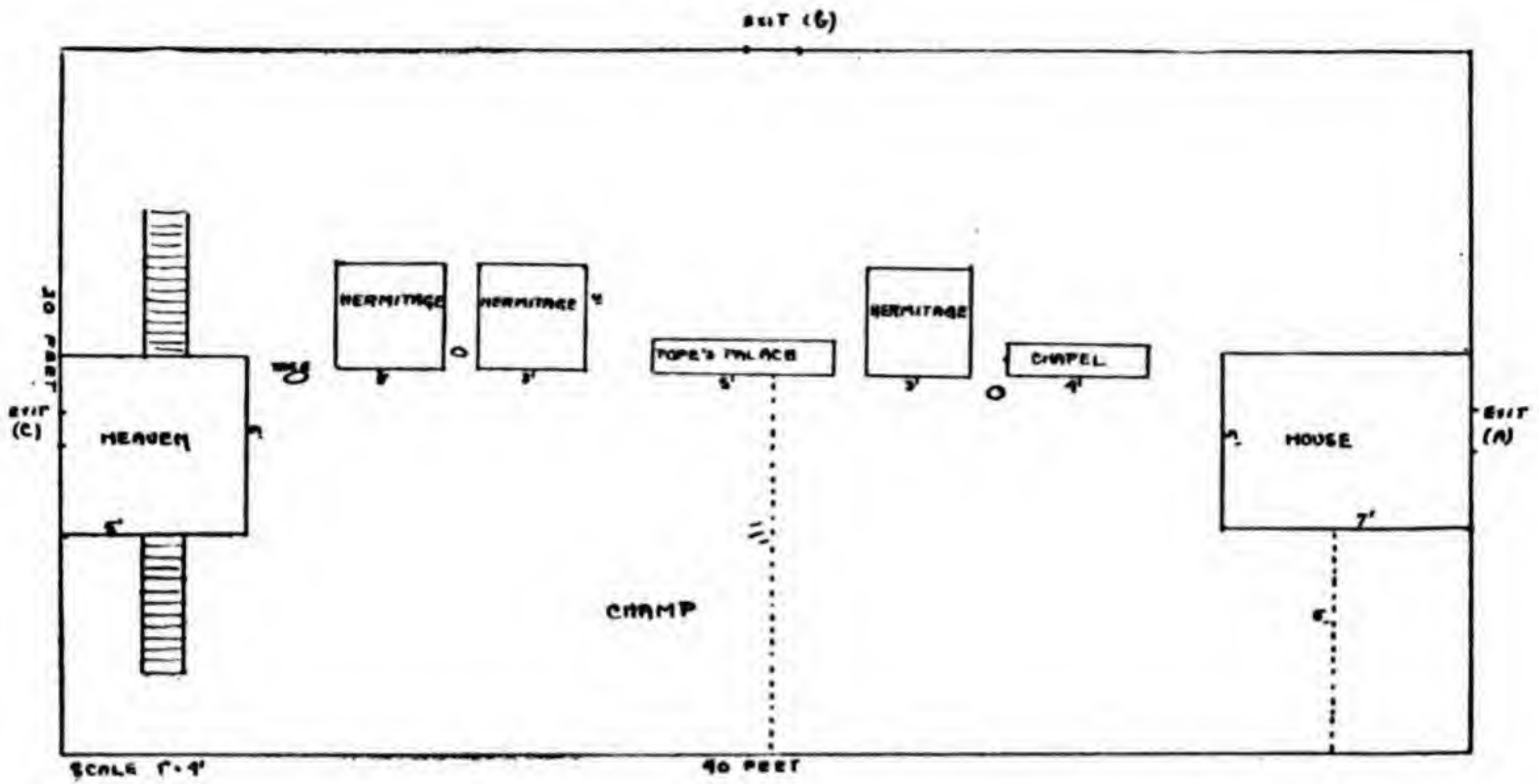
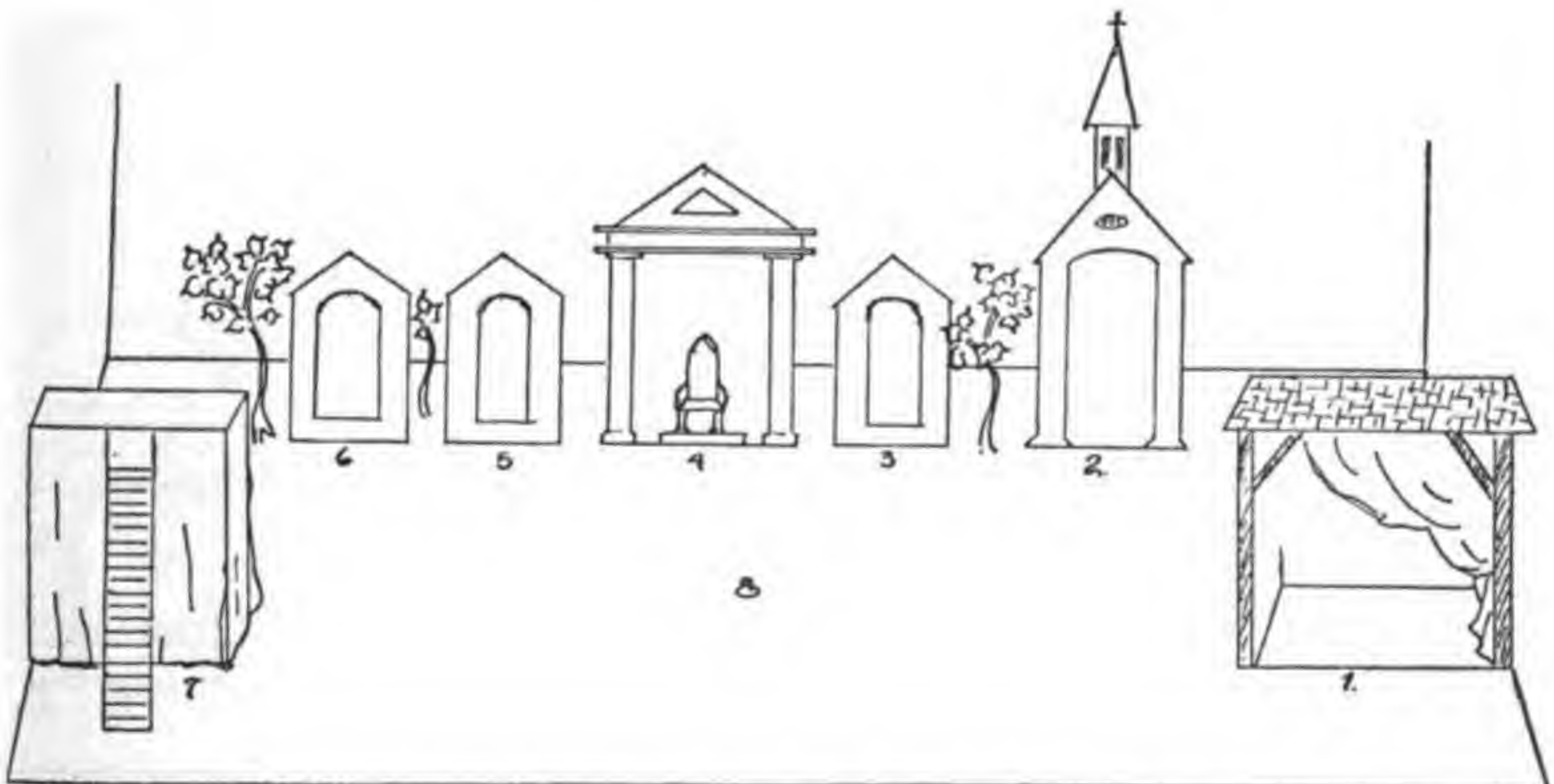


CHART C



1. House 2. Chapel 3. Hermitage 4. Pope's Palace 5. Hermitage 6. Hermitage
7. Heaven 8. Champ

CHART D

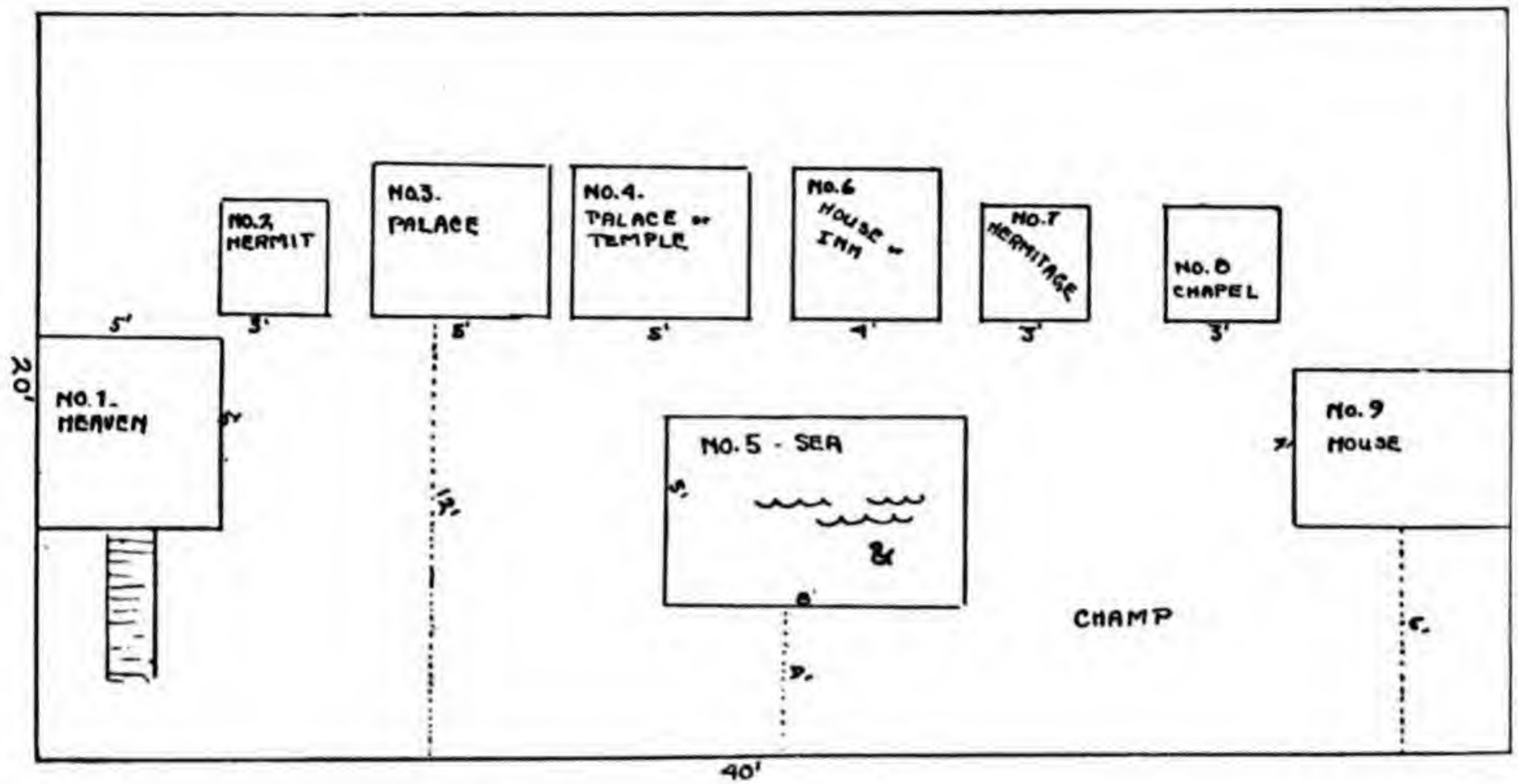
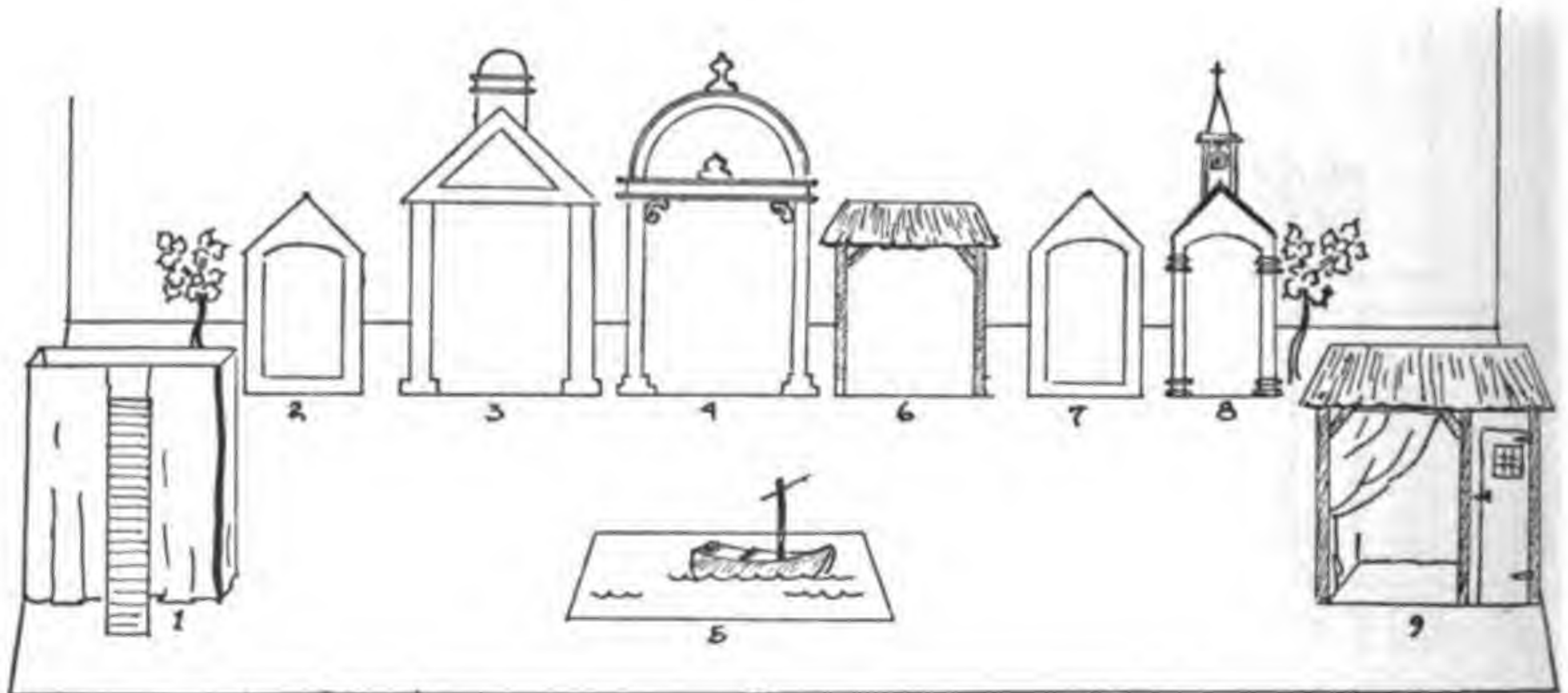


CHART E



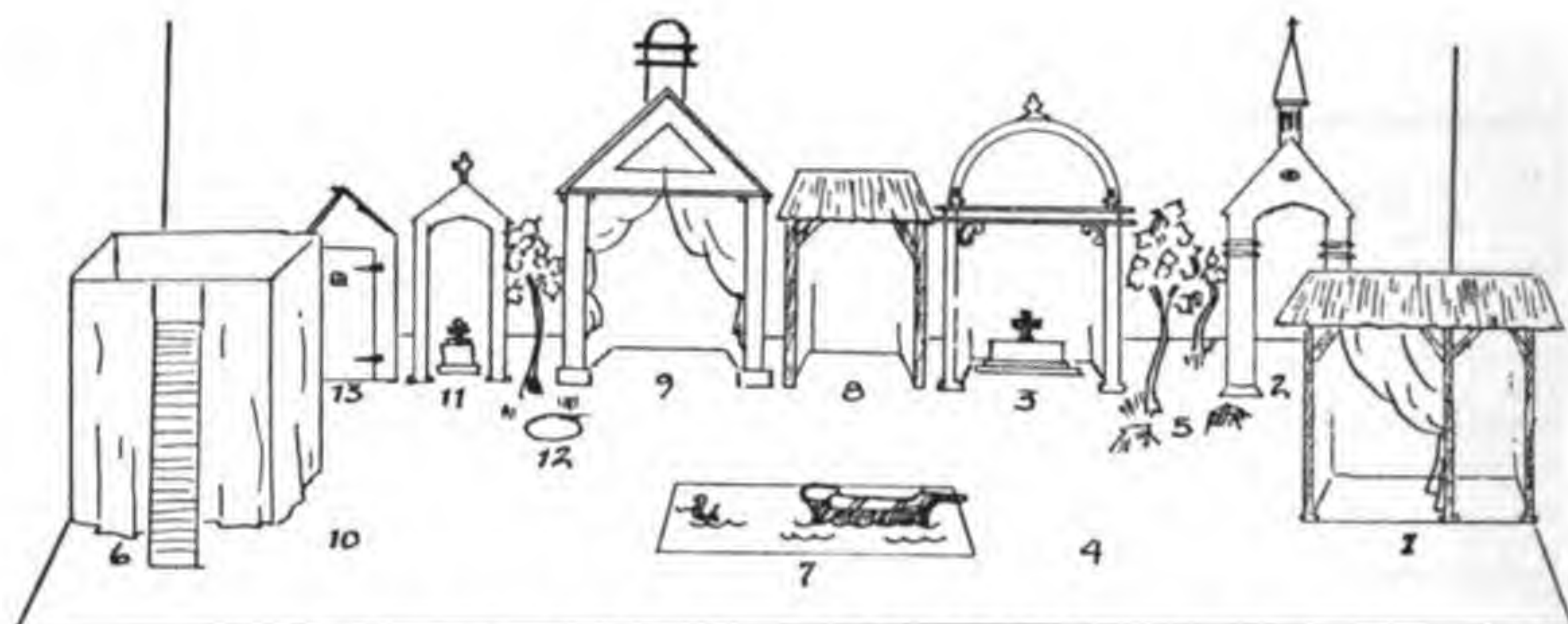
1. Heaven 2. Hermitage 3. Palace 4. Palace or Temple 5. Sea 6. House or Inn
7. Hermitage 8. Chapel 9. House

CHART F

PLAYS ENCIRCLED ARE OF SECULAR THEME.

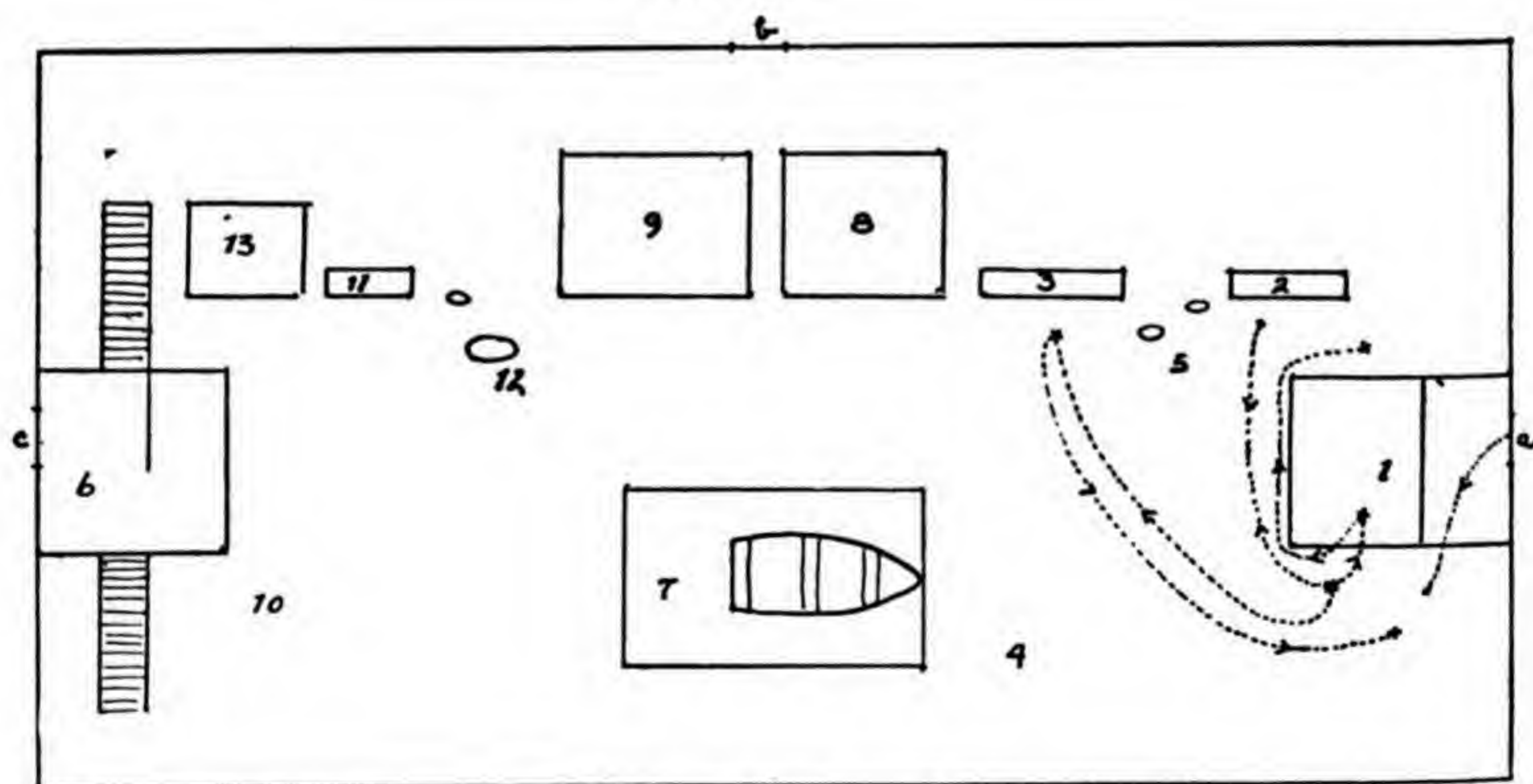
PLAY NO.	FIRE	DEVILS	PRISON	CHILD-BIRTH	TORTURE	HORSE	SHIP	DOG	SOUL	CHAIR	WAND RESTORED	BAPTISM	HELL
1		7		7									
2		3		2									
3								(4)					
4	(4)			5									
5		6			6				6		5		
6											6		
7													
8		9			9				9	70			
9													
10													
11						(12)							
12	(12)	(12)	(12)		13					13		13	13?
13	13	13			14				14	14			14
14	14	14	(15)	(15)									
15	(15)	16											
16													
17		18		18		18							
18													
19													
20												20	
21			21										
22			(23)		22	(23)							
23			24		24								
24	24	25	(25)		25				25				
25	25		(26)										
26	(26)		(27)										
27	(27)		(29)			(28)	(27)				(29)		
28	(28)			(29)									
29	(29)			30		30							
30	30	30	(31)			(31)							
31			(32)	(32)									
32													
33													
34	34				34		34					35	
35													
36		36								36			
37	38		(37)	(37)	38		(37)					39	
38			38	39					40				
39													
40							40						
TOTAL	74	13	12	10	9	7	6	5	5	4	3	4	2

CHART Q



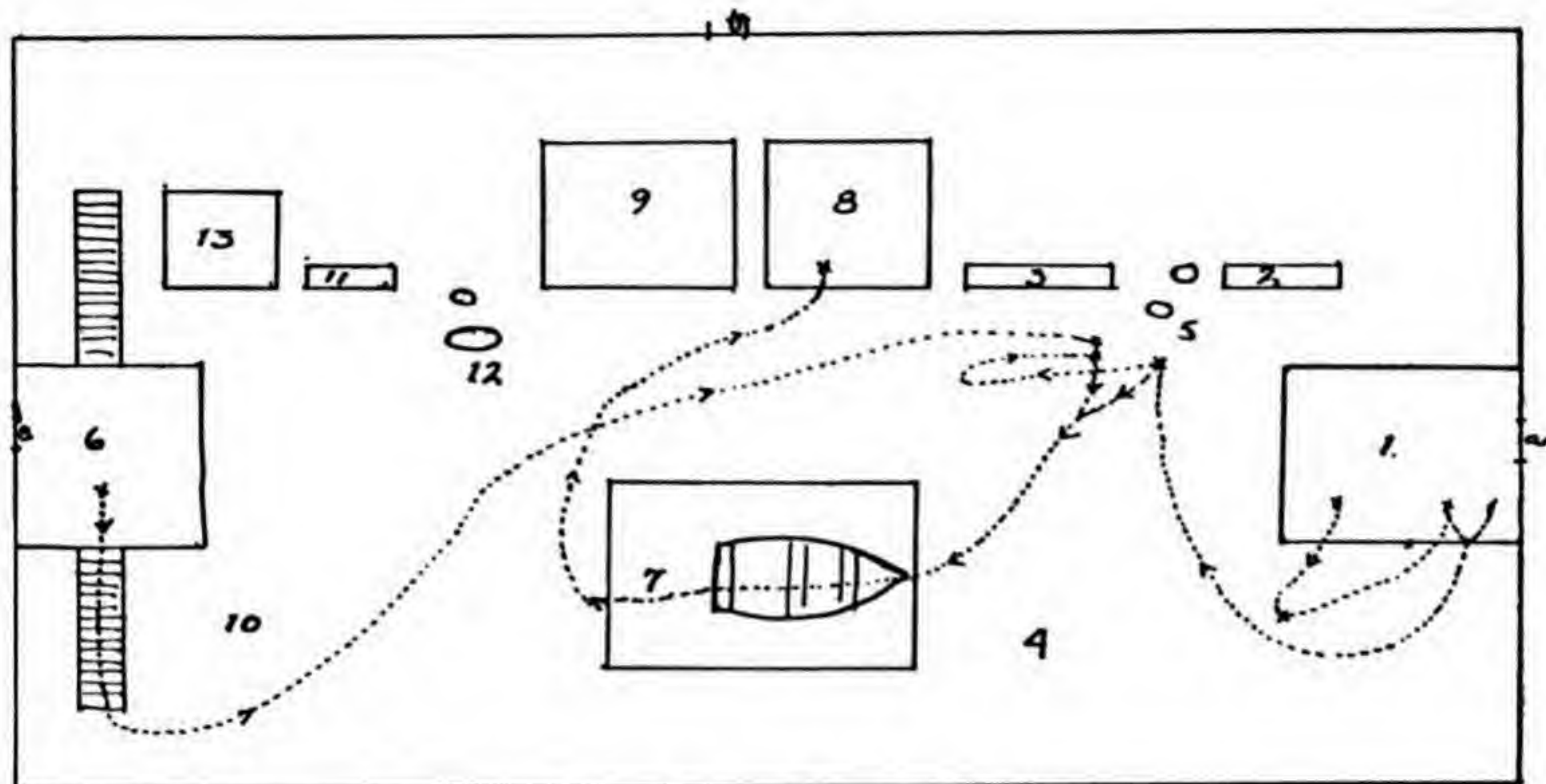
1. King's Palace 2. Church 3. Jerusalem 4. Champ 5. Forest 6. Heaven 7. Sea
8. Inn at Constantinople 9. Palace at Constantinople 10. Meeting Place 11. Chapel
12. Pool 13. Prison

CHART M



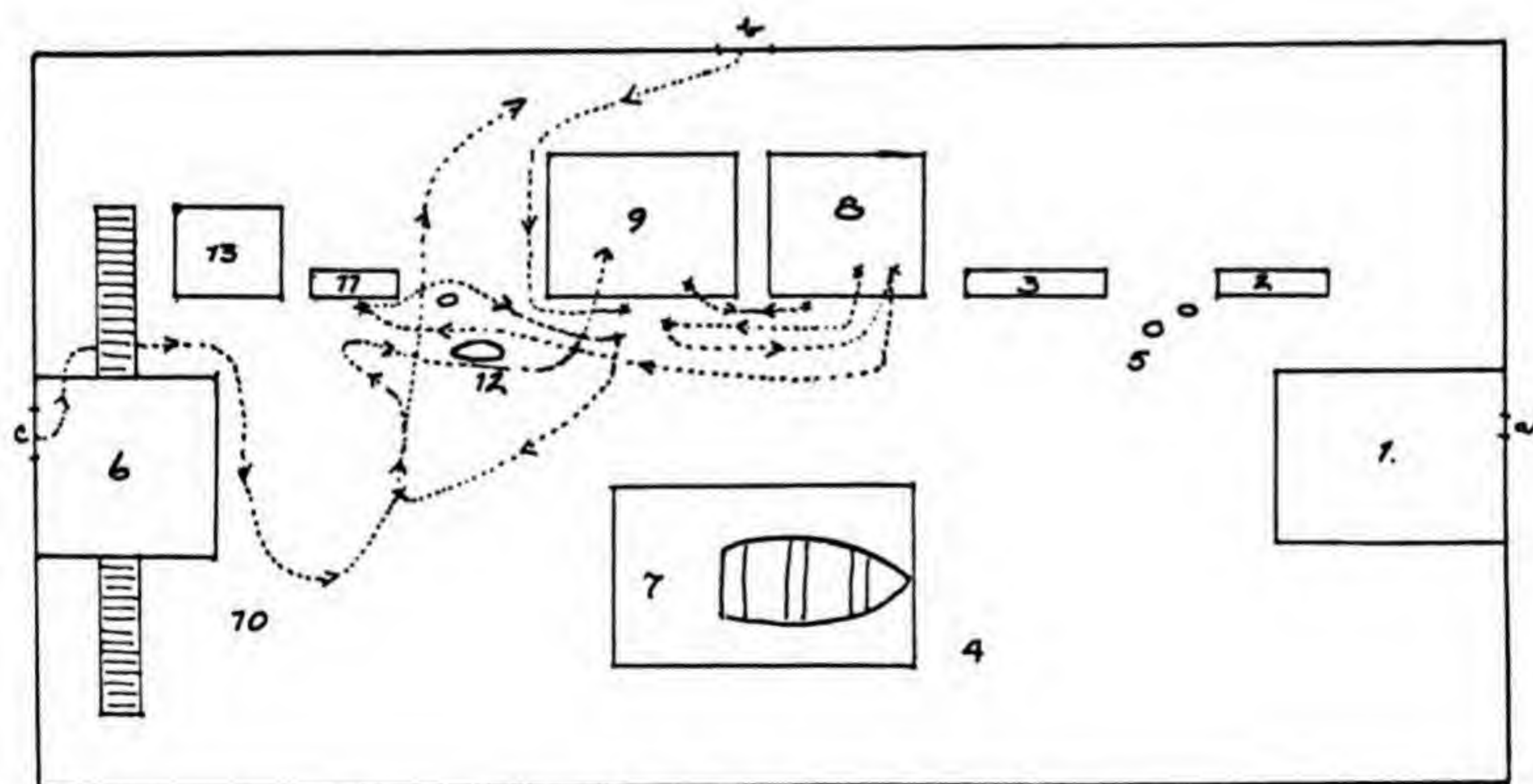
Dotted Line Traces Course of Action

CHART I

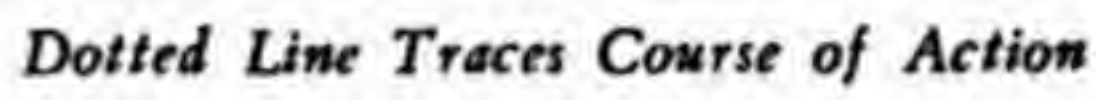


Dotted Line Traces Course of Action

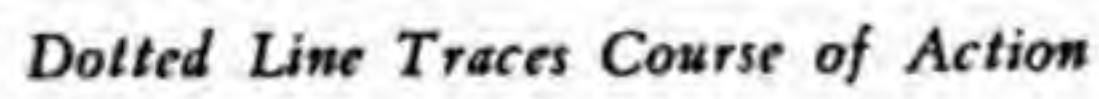
CHART J



Dotted Line Traces Course of Action



6





No. 2



No. 8

*Photographed by permission of the Director
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*



No. 12



No. 14



No. 24



No. 30



No. 32



No. 37

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